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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores how landscape acts as teacher in shaping perceptions of place. At the core of the study is the Thelon Game Sanctuary, located in the central Northwest Territories of Canada. This contentious piece of land has been used historically and is claimed currently by both Dene and Inuit groups. The land also has an intriguing European exploration history, and is valued by various Euro-Canadians for its wilderness characteristics or for its potential for uranium mining. The Chipewyan Dene of Lutsel K'e (Snowdrift) and the Caribou Inuit of Qamanittuaq (Baker Lake) were major primary sources and active collaborators in this study, using project materials for local history and school activities. Using the literature of place for theoretical perspective and the principles of "new ethnography" for method, this investigation employs for analysis historical, scientific, and ethnographic texts, as well as songs, stories, reports, interviews, photographs, literature, poetry, and films. Analysis suggests that four major components contribute to a sense of place (that is, defining oneself in terms of a given piece of land). These land-bonds are toponymic (related to naming places), narrative (involving personal or group stories or legends), experiential (associated particularly with dependence and survival), and numinous (spiritual). The land as teacher in shaping sense of place is explored in the context of indigenous knowledge and models of experiential education. (Contains over 350 references.) (Author/SV)

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FRONTIER, HOMELAND AND SACRED SPACE:

A Collaborative Investigation into Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Place in the Thelon Game Sanctuary, Northwest Territories

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Abstract

This dissertation explores how landscape acts as teacher in shaping perceptions of place. At the core of the study is the Thelon Game Sanctuary, located in the central Northwest Territories of Canada. This contentious piece of land has been used historically, and is claimed currently in territorial negotiations, by both the Lutsel K'e Dene of Great Slave Lake and the Inuit of Baker Lake. It also has an intriguing European exploration history. Using the literature of place for theoretical perspective, and the principles of "new-ethnography" for method, this investigation employs for analysis historical, scientific, and ethnographic texts, in addition to songs, stories, reports, interviews, photographs, literature, poetry and films. Principal source material is derived from interaction with land and people in Lutsel K'e (Snowdrift), Qamanittuaq (Baker Lake), and in the Sanctuary itself—as documented on film, audio tape and through various journal keeping techniques. Analysis using techniques including poetry, visual art, and discursive writing reveal land-bonds as a function of toponymic, narrative, experiential and numinous connections between people. Land-as-teacher is explored in the context of indigenous knowledge and models of experiential education.

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Completion of a project with this scope and geographic range would have been be impossible without support from contributors in Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston, Peterborough, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Yellowknife, Baker Lake, Snowdrift and in the Thelon Game Sanctuary itself.

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Mutna. Marci. Thank you, all.

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Foreword

It is important in these early pages of this dissertation to acknowledge the broad personal context in which this doctoral work is situated, because without understanding or at least appreciating the elements and events in the margins of *Homeland, Frontier and Sacred Space*, a reader would potentially have a truncated perception of the work. The study is driven by an overall desire to better understand how people learn, and specifically how people learn from land. This overall quest has led to many encounters which, for lack of a better explanation, seemed serendipitous—*odd*, even. The author of one of the central conservation reports *happened* to be a person with whom I had studied biology at Queen's University. On the way north, to return to Lutsel K'e for continuation of the research, I *happened* to run into the Sub-Arctic Archaeologist from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Toronto's Terminal Three who happened to be able to provide me with information about matters politic in Lutsel K'e (while we flew on the same flight to Edmonton) without which the project could not have proceeded. There were many other coincidences that have left me ready to acknowledge the totality and interconnectedness of all events in one's life, especially with respect to this project and how it *seems* to have all been pre-planned. I wish to make no more of this, except to say that, when I was invited to participate in a Trent University wilderness seminar in Temagami having to do with Canada and the land, I was struck by the relatedness of a poem written at the event by another writer who attended the weekend. I present it here in celebration and acknowledgement of all that surrounds this project of which I am unaware, able to feel but unable to see,

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and all the goodness and energy that has come to this project in addition to or in spite of my struggling efforts:

WANAPITEI

That it takes so long
for the journey to reveal itself
distance only a point on a line
looking back

that it takes so long
to hear under white city hum
a steady rhythm
drumming for this granite land

obdurate stubborn heart
half-cracked
but beating on
saying: stop
saying: listen
the seventh fire blazes
where you have been
on slag and clearcut
bloodied grouse
plastic and foil and slicked seabirds on sand
a reproach of light
in oily darkness

that it takes so long
to understand that the land
has, finally, to teach us
its own dying
a gentle withdrawing
like hand still curved
from another's touch
so little flesh
the bones shine through
with light enough
to take us forward
if we choose to go.

Joanne Page

PART I: INTRODUCTION

1

Experience, Ideas and a Northern Place

> We are here to witness the creation and to abet it. We are here to notice each thing so each thing gets noticed. Together we notice not only each mountain shadow and each stone on the beach but, especially, we notice the beautiful faces and complex natures of each other. We are here to bring to consciousness the beauty and power that are around us and to praise the people who are here with us. We witness our generation and our times. We watch the weather. Otherwise, creation would be playing to an empty house.
>
> According to the second law of thermodynamics, things fall apart. Structures disintegrate. Buckminster Fuller hinted at a reason we are here: By creating things, by thinking up new combinations, we counteract this flow entropy. We make new structures, new wholenesses, so the universe comes out even. A shepherd on a hilltop who looks at a mess of stars and thinks, "There's a hunter, a plow, a fish," is making mental connections that have as much real force in the universe as the very fires in those stars themselves.[1]

Few places on the planet celebrate the power and majesty of the universe more than the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Sitting on a textured green tundra hill at the junction of the Hanbury and Thelon Rivers, gazing east, I see the Thelon River switching back and forth to the skyline, bisecting a land of incomparable pattern and form. Blonde river sand and blue water sparkle in contrast to the quiet glow of black spruce in the valleys. And up away from the river, away from the trees, to the northwest and the southeast, dusty green carpets of labrador tea, bearberry, and caribou moss are scratched with orderly parallel lines that look ready for the hand of a great composer to draft some opus, a symphony perhaps, to the most beautiful place on earth.

I have come here with three friends, by canoe, from Lynn Lake, Manitoba. We have been paddling and portaging for three weeks; we have three weeks yet to go. In the time that has passed, we have travelled over the edge of the great northern forest and out onto bald tundra, but now, at this place, we have come back into trees—a boreal oasis they call it—trees that have been feeding the fires and the imaginations of people for thousands of years.

---

[1] Comments by Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and teacher, Annie Dillard, on the meaning of life, as excerpted in *Life* **14**(16), December 1991 issue, 69.

Inuit people from over near Hudson Bay, from the community of Baker Lake where we are headed, used to come here to get wood to build boats and sleds. Indian people from the west came here to hunt caribou and muskox and to trap white fox. And since the turn of the century, people of Euro-Canadian stock have come here too: some have been murdered; some have died of "natural" causes like exposure and starvation. At a place somewhere—there, in the distance—a group of American adventurers paddled here and built a cabin, wanting to have a quintessential Canadian wilderness experience; they were the ones on whom the errant Soviet satellite COSMOS 954 landed in 1978. I too have come here to experience this mysterious northern land, to live out a would-be explorer's dream, but today I am struck by all that has gone on at this place and, apparently, how little the land has changed in the years since the ice made these marks on its way north for the last time.

We are in the heart of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, a preserve set aside in 1927 to protect populations of muskoxen that had been all but decimated by hunters in search of meat and valuable hides. Aside from the muskoxen, the 38,850 square kilometre preserve touches the Back and Dubawnt Rivers on its northern and southeastern boundaries respectively and includes a significant portion of the Thelon River valley, one of the largest unaltered watersheds in the world. Ranging between 63.5° and 65.5° N latitude, summer days are nearly

24-hours long with average temperatures in the high teens to low twenties on the Celsius scale. Winter days approach total darkness in December and January with temperatures averaging in the -20 to -25° C range. Precipitation is light year round, totalling less than 30 cm per year. Today, along with growing numbers of muskoxen, are grizzly bears, wolves, wolverines, geese, falcons, caribou, and the only populations of beaver and moose in the world who live north of the continuous treeline. Having seen bears and geese and wolverines, and walked among caribou and muskoxen in the Sanctuary and at the Hanbury-Thelon confluence, I thought, if ever it became possible, I should like to come back to this place, maybe even in winter, to experience it again. It was in that passing fancy, sitting in the bugs and the sunshine savouring the lush riparian world of the Thelon, that this project had its genesis.

In the 14 years prior to embarking on this doctoral project, I spent at least a few weeks each year living, travelling, researching and/or working in the Northwest Territories. From working on a crew putting pre-fabricated metal buildings together in the Mackenzie Delta in 1977, to doing on-the-ground research for Parks Canada at Bathurst Inlet in 1980 and '81; from guiding for Black Feather Wilderness Adventures in Auyuittuq Park in 1985 to serving as the base camp manager for an international archaeological expedition on the Kazan River in 1988, I was fortunate in these years to explore the north, in one way or another, from Alaska to Baffin Island.

During teacher's college in the mid-70s, it was my great desire to get a job teaching in a northern settlement, but that unfortunately never came about; instead, I was left to find my way north in the interstices between bouts of teaching, picking up contracts if available, or financing ventures personally. Although there is arguably more to it than that, this doctoral exploration of place is really just the next in a long series of novel excuses to go north. Had I been a teacher in a northern community—having now a number of friends, colleagues and students who are—I suspect that my perspective on the place would be quite different. Although I have lived for several months in both Baker Lake and Broughton Island, my experience in the north has not been in the communities, it has been out on the land. I know neither northern milieu well, but I know the exigencies of land life better than I know the realities of long winters living in a community, perhaps as a result of me being a curious and itinerant rambler. It is my sense that, barring very exceptional individuals, life for displaced southern teachers is an insular existence of the first order that rarely results in people becoming attached in any lasting way to the place.

I don't know what the attraction of the north is for me. I am pretty sure I could never live there. I am too attached to the social, technological, and intellectual opportunities of the south. But the north for me has been a place of great joy, great hardship, and great insight. I have learned about nature. I have learned about human nature. And through times when I have been more helpless and more afraid than I have ever been in my life, I have come to know myself in ways never experienced closer to home. I think, in the end, the north for me is an edge place. You never seem to learn anything while you're sitting in the fat, comfortable middle of what you know. It is only on the margins, when you're stretched to the physical, emotional or intellectual limit, that *real* learning starts to happen.

In the north, it seems, especially out on the land, all manner of edges present themselves. If you're not gleaning new insights about food chains in the interminable seconds during which a charging grizzly bear decides that this is a *false* charge, you're encountering the land legacy—stone chips, tent rings and inuksuit—of a people who lived on the land without maps or plastic. And if you're not fearing for your life before a wind that is shredding the best tent that money can buy, you're experiencing silence and stillness that send shivers up and down your spine.

Other people have appreciated the north as an *edge-place* of the first order. One of the reasons I like the elegaic musings of Canadian anthropologist Hugh Brody is because for him, too, the north is a marginal place. He writes:

> I write about the far north in the belief that we can best discover who we are by going to what we think of as the margins of our world. Faced with societies and lands that question our everyday assumptions and challenge our preconceptions, it is possible to discover the importance of others and truths about ourselves. (Brody 1987: xiii)

Fundamentally what this dissertation is about is the way in which land is constructed in the minds of people of three different cultures. Although land exists, the *scape* is a projection of human consciousness.[2] So in its simplest form, this dissertation is about the way in which *land*—the thing you can walk on, measure, map, paint, buy, sell and assay—is transformed in the human mind into land*scape*, a much broader, far reaching, and illusive entity. It is the way in which this *scape* is constructed in the human imagination that creates what I mean when I use the term *sense of place.* The basic supposition of this piece of work is that sense of place is one of the founding principles of human nature. What this dissertation attempts to do is to empirically explore sense of place and its component parts, using the notion of land-as-teacher as a lens to bring ideas into focus.

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[2] This idea comes from Porteous (1990) and will be contextualized in the next chapter.

The idea of approaching the subject through the methods and assumptions of cultural anthropology grew out of work that had been done at the Master's level in education. My thesis (Raffan 1983) constituted, at its core, an ethnographic exploration of the work worlds of two outdoor educators, and drew on the writing of people including Becker, Wolcott and Geertz. This connection to method and literature, combined with my abiding interest in field work, made cultural anthropology a natural intellectual base from which to begin exploring the possible ways that this project might be done. The best disciplinary home for this study, however, turned out to be the Geography Department at Queen's University. Geography's synthetic nature and long tradition of land-focussed study combined with enthusiasm on the part of some geographers for for eclectic, interdisciplinary investigations established a fertile context in which to set my study.

To begin with, this is not a history of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Nor is it a standard anthropological investigation of an "other's" yearly round. Nor is it an oral history and mapping exercise to add to a geographic base for political decision making with respect to native land claims. It is a *collaborative* investigation of people's perception of place. And because it is a work involving people of three different cultures, the dissertation itself needs to be of possible use to members of all three groups. I am thinking here particularly of the Chipewyan Dene of Lutsel K'e and the Caribou Inuit of Qamanittuaq, both of whom know the Thelon area and have used it historically. My bet is this: of most value to the native groups involved will be the words of the elders and community members who spoke to the question; of secondary importance will be the analysis and interpretation of the words. Of most value to Euro-Canadian readers, people who are used to this style of document, will be—one hopes—the analysis and interpretation that lead to an answer of the work's central question; of secondary importance to this group will be the words of the individuals in Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq. While in the past a dissertation of this sort might have been written exclusively for a western, intellectual audience, that is certainly not the case today. *Because* of the collaborative nature of this work, and the way in which the people of Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq have been involved in the process of approving the research plan, and will be involved in workshops of the findings, as well as keeping copies of the tapes, transcripts and written documents for future use, right in the communities, a reality of this work is that the words of consultants and the analytical text must be considered with equanimity, as much as possible. This guiding principle of the writing of this research has much to do with the size of this document.

Another reason for including more, as opposed to less, of the spoken, written and experiential land perspectives for each of the three cultural groups who know the Thelon, has to do with my uncertainty about the strength of the conclusions drawn in the final chapter. I have lived through the passage of this research and, while I believe these findings to be fair and accurate representations of the ideas and images that were analysed, another reader might have a different interpretation of these views of place. With the assumption that these cross-cultural, written, spoken and lived perspectives of place can be appreciated in different ways, just as one reader might draw different conclusions from a poem or a novel or a piece of art than another reader, a central task of this piece of work, besides the analysis necessary for doctoral examination, is to lay out the voices of the Thelon carefully and methodically to leave open the possibility of other interpretations.

That said, I would like to raise the issue of cultural blindness. Most of the oral information that came from the people of Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq was spoken in either Chipewyan or Inuktitut and filtered through interpreters. Although I have nothing but the highest regard for the abilities of Archie Catholique and John Pudnak, interpreters in Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq respectively, enough has been said by cross-cultural researchers who *do* speak the "other" language for one to know that nuance of meaning and subtleties of understanding are lost in the process of translation. Add to that the very likely possibility that there exist words in Chipewyan and Inuktitut that simply cannot be translated *and* the unsettling possibility (reality?) that there are concepts and ideas that simply do not cross from one culture to another, and there is reason to think that this study, which purports to represent both Dene and Inuit views, is flawed. If it is, it is not wittingly so. I do, however, get great joy and a modicum of relief to know that this blindness is only a problem for people outside Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq. Copies of the English transcripts are in the communities already, and other bilingual products of the research are being prepared on an on-going basis for northern schools. But most importantly, copies of the original tapes have been stored in both Lutel K'e and Qamanittuaq and eventually these, along with Chipewyan and Inuktitut transcripts, will be available for any community member to use. At a time when, for all of us, the relationship between ourselves and the land on which we live is becoming central to our continued survival, I have pressed ahead with this cross-cultural research with the best of intentions, with the utmost of care, and with the assumption that *some* work in this area of discourse is better than none at all.

The best support one might muster to bolster such a decision comes from a comment made by Hugh Brody at the outset of his chapter on Inuit perceptions of land in the Report of the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project. Brody writes:

> The Eskimo language, *Inuktitut*, does not readily translate into English—there are grammatical constructions, sets of notions, and a vast specialized vocabulary. Moreover, many of those who recorded their views for the Land Use and Occupancy study are men and women who have lived most of their lives on the land [the same as the consultants for this study]. They are persons steeped in Inuit culture and knowledge, and they use their language superbly. Inuktitut has many levels and, according to older persons, it is a language of a richness and subtlety that are acquired only over many years of life on the land. Yet richness and subtlety of that kind are not easily conveyed in English, even by a translator who has a complete grasp of Inuktitut at its best. ... For these reasons, the English of the transcripts often has a grammatical and verbal simplicity that is not part of the original. ... However, we believe that the essay does convey some measure of the feeling that the Inuit have for their land. The evidence here may only be a crude sign post, but it points in directions that the Inuit [and in this case Chipewyan Dene] themselves suggested. (Brody, in Freeman 1976: 185)

Context of the Study

During the 1980s and the early years of the 1990s, images of people in conflict over land have slowly burned themselves into the consciousness of all Canadians. Barriers, blockades, protests, flags, and fires have become symbols of land use disagreements amongst people of different traditions. The major players are governments and native peoples from coast to coast to coast. The Innu in Labrador, James Bay Cree, Algonquin of Barriere Lake, Teme-Augama Anishnabai in Ontario, Lubicon in Alberta, Haida of the Queen Charlotte Islands, and the Dene/Metis of the Mackenzie River valley have all fought in one way or another with governments over land. Perhaps best known of all are the Mohawks of Kanesatake near Oka, Quebec. At the height of that conflict, in the midst of barbed wire, tear gas, guns and assault uniforms stood Mohawk Ellen Gabriel, who asked quietly, "Why should someone die for nine holes of golf? This is crazy."[3]

Canadians are coming to the stark realization that there is no place left for unchecked development. In other places on the globe, similar questions have been asked of and by other aboriginals. Cultural survivalist Mac Chapin observed:

> Gone are the days when [native people] could retreat and redraw their territories beyond the periphery of the modernized world. With their living spaces shrinking, their escape routes are blocked, bringing them face to face with forces with which they cannot compete (Chapin 1990: 2).

The struggles of Canadian Indian and Inuit people are mirrored around the globe in the lives of the Yanomami in northern Brazil, the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest in Zaire, the Suma of the Honduran Mosquitia, the Kuna of Panama and the

---

[3] As quoted in May (1990): 70.

Pehuenche of Chile. Thomas Berger's latest book (Berger, 1991) makes this same point very clearly.

Fights between indigenous peoples and the dominant cultures are symptomatic of a global problem (i.e. May 1990; Nietschmann 1973; 1989). While growth continues in every sector of almost every economy, the *total* amount of land available for human use remains the same. The pivotal Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, brought this fact to public light, saying:

> When the century began, neither numbers nor technology had the power radically to alter planetary systems. As the century closes, not only do we have that power, but major, unintended changes are occurring in the atmosphere, in soils, in waters, among plants and animals, and in the relationships among all of these (Bruntland 1987: 22).

Competition for resources—land particularly—can only increase.

If the conflict at Oka is in any way an example, this competition is not so much a fight about conflicting land uses as it is about departures in points of view about what land represents. To the developer, land may be a commodity that can be bought and sold; to the recreationist, land can be a place of haven from technology; to the industrialist, land may represent timber, ore, or energy potential; to the aboriginal, land, in all its dimensions, may be an integral part of a god-centered universe. So while a land conflict may focus on functional issues—timber rights, or golf—the fight itself is more likely rooted in the deep-seated emotional bonds that tie people to places. To say the police corporal's death at Oka was "for nine holes of golf" was a gross oversimplification. Unfortunately, in the case of the Mohawks of Kanasatake and the town council of Oka, Quebec, there was nothing available, no words or literature or existing understandings previously articulated, to help others comprehend these two very different interpretations of what the disputed land means.

Humanistic geographers have explored how people derive meaning from landscape using combined methods of ethnography and phenomenology. These investigations of various people's life worlds used careful description, touching primary anthropological sources and secondary literature, to illuminate a variety of themes and generalities having to do with home, horizons of reach, artistic expressions of place, and the sensual and emotional experience of place. Fieldwork is rare in this kind of work, and the discoveries about sense of place have never been used to understand or ameliorate conflict over land. For example, in all of the research into the possibility of building a gas pipeline down the valley of the Mackenzie River in the north of Canada, never, to my knowledge, was the emerging literature on sense of place used to understand the respective native and developer positions on the project.

As current conflicts illustrate, sense of place—the knowledge and feelings that bind people to particular pieces of land—may well create and drive conflict over diminishing land resources, and as such, has great potential for understanding, if not helping to resolve, such dilemmas. Research is needed to examine contentious land through the lens of existing ideas about sense of place, but to do so from the perspectives of *all* groups who have a stake in that land. The focus here is on land, and how it imposes meaning on travellers, inhabitants, and other groups to whom the place has enduring significance.

What is being proposed here is not simply collecting for analysis the claims and counter claims of the people involved in some conflict. Rather, I'm thinking of an assessment of every available interpretation of one piece of land from each interest group—songs, stories, interviews, scientific reports—to attempt to understand what that piece of land *means*, in sense of place terms, to each of the parties. What is required is research that puts the idea of sense of place to work to find out how the various people who share one area derive meaning from that land, and how that land imposes meaning on people. It is an investigation that will pick up and build on the notion of a reciprocal relationship between nature and culture, specifically the way in which the natural environment is transformed and represented in human lives and understandings. The first and most immediate contribution of such work would be a potentially dramatic broadening of understandings about the field on which land use negotiations occur. On a more long term scale, such research could provide archetypal language, structures, and mechanisms with which to mediate other conflicts in other places. Even if at best this investigation yields only evidence of irreconcilable views about land, glimpses of the mechanisms of differences in cross-cultural perceptions of place will be a contribution to research on the subject.

It is worth mentioning also that this investigation maps nicely onto imperatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which calls for research with the following characteristics: considers the environment in its totality—natural and built, technological, and social (economic, political, cultural-historical, moral, aesthetic); is interdisciplinary in approach, drawing on the specific content of each discipline in making a holistic and balanced perspective; examines major environmental issues from a regional point of view; focuses on current and potential environmental situations while taking into account the historical perspective; promotes the value and necessity of local cooperation in the prevention and solution of environmental problems; and explicitly considers environmental aspects in plans for development and growth (UNESCO 1988: 10).

Study Area

The Thelon Game Sanctuary in the mainland Northwest Territories is a highly suitable area for such a study. This piece of land, the size of Nova Scotia, straddling the Thelon River, was set aside in 1927 to protect muskoxen living in the area. My interest in this place began in the early 1980s, when I passed through the Sanctuary by canoe. However, other attributes make it a very attractive study area. The Dene/Metis to the west *and* the Inuit to the east both claimed this land as their own in negotiations with the federal government; the Government of the Northwest Territories has thought about turning the area into a national park; the Government of Canada has made moves, over the last number of years, to open the area to uranium mining; naturalists value the area for its wilderness characteristics; the department of National Defence has marked it as a low level flight training corridor for fighter pilots. Potentially, this could be the Oka of years to come.

Research Questions

This dissertation examines the Chipewyan, Inuit, and the myriad Euro-Canadian understandings of the Thelon Game Sanctuary to several ends: for the sake of the land itself; for the sake of the various constituents who will invariably

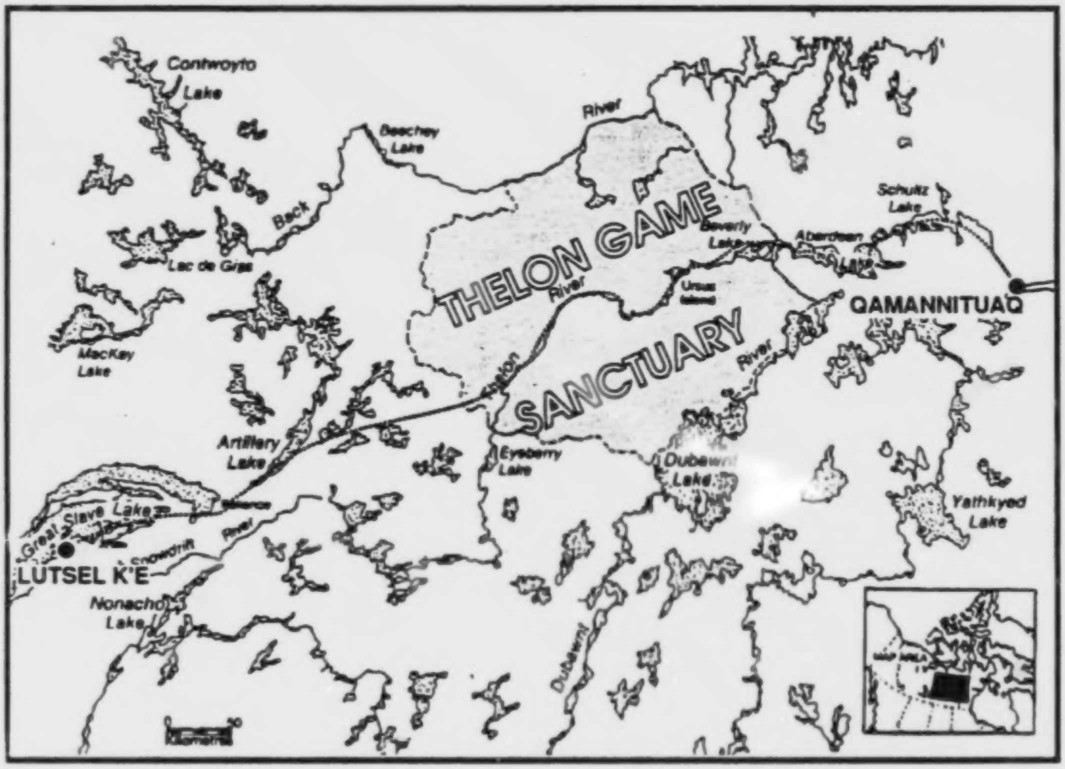
Contwoyto Lake
Beechey Lake
River
Back
Lac de Gras
MacKay Lake
THELON GAME
SANCTUARY
Thelon
River
Beverly Lake
Aberdeen Lake
Schultz Lake
Ursus Islands
River
QAMANNITUAQ
Artillery Lake
Eyeberry Lake
Dubawnt Lake
Yathkyed Lake
Great Slave Lake
LUTSEL K'E
Snowdrift River
Nonacho Lake
Dubawnt
Kilometres

Figure 1. **The Thelon Game Sanctuary:** Located halfway between Great Slave Lake and Chesterfield Inlet, the Thelon Game Sanctuary, established in 1927, is the equal in area to the province of Nova Scotia. It was set aside by federal order in council to protect muskoxen.

fight—and possibly die—for what the land means to them; for the sake of better understanding the deep roots of land conflict. Future policy making, if it is to be sensitive, must be *grounded* in each society's existential assessment and understanding of this setting that links past to future.

The central question is one which grows out of my own interest in landscape, in the Canadian north, and in environmental education, and that is: *how does land act as teacher?* Asked another way, this query might be phrased, *how does land impose meaning on human consciousness?* The question has two parts: *what knowledge and attitudes do people of different cultures hold with respect to the land on which they live, and how did they come to have these attitudes?* To answer the question, one must then ask, *how, and in what form, are land knowledge and attitudes held and communicated?*

Research Context

The intellectual context of these research questions is shaped by the writings and traditions of cultural geography about perceptions of environment, landscape, agency and sense of place; the growing and sometimes scattered literature of environmental issues and concerns, especially in the areas of deep ecology, bioregionalism, and spirituality; aspects of discourse in ethnology and anthropology, in particular writing about "new-ethnography"; and selected titles from the literature of Canada and the land, focusing specifically on northern writings having to do with exploration, travel, land claims and resource management.

But the study draws on traditions that are as old as the discipline itself. Strabo, writing in 7 B.C., believed that geography comprised knowledge regarding "the activities of statesmen and commanders but also [regarding knowledge of] the heavens and of things of land and sea, animals, plants, fruits and everything else to be seen in various regions."[4] Beginning at the tips of its Greek roots, *geo-graphy* has involved *writing* about the earth. This study celebrates this tradition—a tradition characterized by Osborne this way:

> Ever since Strabo, and certainly in the work of the French regional monographists, and some would argue in that of more contemporary figures such as Donald Meinig, Eric Ross, and Cole Harris, geography has been a literary discipline. Its exponents have always understood what the "geo" meant: it had to do with land, place, and people's interaction with them. And they also knew how they would report on their investigations: in a literary mode. That is what differentiated "geo-graphy" from "geo-logy;" and "ethno-graphy" from "ethno-logy;" and "bio-graphy" from "bio-logy" (Osborne 1988: 1).

From Ptolemy, in 50 A.D., who set the descriptive pattern for Magellan, Columbus and Vasco da Gama, through the genesis of German, French, British and North American derivations of the discipline, to the present day geography has drawn its strength from writing and from the intellectual variety and creative impudence of its practitioners. Celebrating geography as such a home Stoddart wrote:

> There is a different world, of great beauty and diversity, waiting for exploration. Its geography brings deep satisfaction and immense pleasure: it is also fun. Over the years it has attracted a remarkable collection of frequently bizzare and occasionally outrageous people (Stoddart 1986: x).[5]

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[4] As quoted in Lebon, 1955, page 12.

[5] Stoddart remarks about Wooldrige's concerns about geographers in the 1940s embarking on studies that took the "ge- out of geography" (x). Thirty years later, with the growth of the humanistic tradition in geography, one might argue that these practitioners, like

However, to the extent that there is a long tradition of writing in geography, and especially writing about people/place relationships within the context of cultural geography, it is important to reach back into the geographic literature to highlight relevant research. Carl Sauer and the Berkeley School of cultural geography were major players in regional descriptions of the middle decades of this century. Social scientific analysis and quantitative regional analysis predominated in the 1960s. In the 1970s, however, a shift back toward the humanities took place, a trend which has continued to the point that imagination, symbolism and even fantasy are again being discussed in mainstream examinations of people/place relationships.

Perhaps the first modern writing by geographers about people/place relationships was in 1903 when *Tableau de la géographie de la France* was published by French geographer Paul Vidal de la Blache. This work led to writing on the concept of geographic personality or personality of place (i.e. Fox 1932 and Sauer 1941). This theme was central to human geography in the first half of this century (Dunbar 1974), but has since been subsumed by other lines of thinking; however, it remains pertinent as background literature to this investigation because of the way in which it purposefully attempts to come to terms with human perception (personification) of environment.

In reading about place, many geographers (Darby 1948; Paterson 1965; Gilbert 1972; Pocock 1981; Hudson 1982) point to regional novels and travellers' accounts of the Victorian era as being important early insights into people in place.

Tuan and Meinig, for example, were responding to the erosion of the *graphos*—the craft of writing—in the communication of earth-linked sensibilities.

Although geographers continue to write about authors such as Thomas Hardy, Walter Scott, and Arnold Bennett (Jackson 1989), the way in which literature is being used by geographers is changing, as will be illustrated later in this review. It is valuable to recognize, however, that the first people to write about human relationships with places were writers of fiction.

As alluded to earlier, as a thread that continues to run through much current work in human and cultural geography, the literature of cultural ecology is a building block of the foundation of this investigation. And although geographic analysis has grown away from the simplistic reification of culture as an organism surviving in a particular ecological niche, the work of Steward, Sauer, Eyre, Nietschmann and others is important because of the implication that patterns of material culture (in this case in Lutsel K'e and Baker Lake, N.W.T.), particularly among so-called primitive human groups, can be explained as adaptations to environmental necessity.

Environmental determinism, the previous step in this direction of analysis of the human/land relationship (i.e. Semple 1911 and Taylor 1951), has all but been discredited and abandoned by geographers. However, as late as 1967, Glacken (*Traces on Rhodian Shore*) pointed out that thinking about the influence of environment on people can be traced back to classical antiquity, and as such makes this line of thinking at least of tangential interest to this investigation. Picking up on the notion of structural functionism the cultural ecologists gleaned from anthropology, one must when thinking about Canada's North—nodding to the environmental determinists—consider the undeniable and powerful impact the northern environment must have had on lives of the native people who dwell there.

Latter-day rethinking by geographers about technological and socio-economic imperatives derived from the environment was informed by cultural ecologists and anthropologists in particular (i.e. Steward 1963, 1977; Harris 1979, 1985, 1987; Mikesell 1967; Grossman 1977; Newson 1976; Stoddart 1965; and Ross 1970, 1991).

The influential Berkeley School of cultural geography comes to bear directly on this work as well for reasons including its emphasis on fieldwork as the ultimate source and checking mechanism for all reconstructions of human enterprise (Billinge 1986). Although humanistic geographers (i.e. Tuan 1976b) are quick to distance themselves from the Berkeley School, Carl Sauer's influential work on the personality of landscape and the centrality of human agency in changing the face of the earth has spun off into the work of dozens of researchers who have focused on the notion of cultural ecology and human geography as an evolving entity. While Sauer's work constitutes background for this study, his influential paper "The Agency of Man on Earth" (Sauer 1956) illustrates how his view is in some ways antithetical to my questions about how land informs people. One writer characterized the difference in this way:

> [Sauer's] principal interest was in landscape as a record of human activity rather than in the social systems through which human agency is actively expressed. ... [H]is discussion concentrated on physical and biological processes set in motion by human intervention rather than on social processes *per se* (Jackson 1989: 14).

In the wake of interest in the quantification of regional analysis in the middle decades of this century, the 1970s saw the rise of a new humanism in geography (Ley and Samuels 1978). This renaissance in thinking in cultural geography led to the conceptualization of the core concept of *sense of place* meaning a quality of space that lives in the minds and emotions of people who live there.

Although Clay (1957), Cobb (1959) and others were writing about the relationship between mind and nature in the 1950s, the idea of sense of place was really a formulation of humanistic geographers a decade later. Early studies of people and place relationships took the form of regional descriptions. These were followed by more quantitative investigations of territoriality, environmental perceptions, geopolitics and migration that addressed people's functional relationships with place (Hay 1988). Emphasis on being scientific led to understandings about human positioning in space, leaving out any consideration of emotional bonds to places where people live (Eyre 1973). Prior to the important work by Yi-Fu Tuan, and other humanistic geographers in the mid-1970s, emotive bonds to places had been ignored.

In an important review article on sense of place, Hay (1988) contends that geographers like Tuan (1974a), Buttimer (1976), Relph (1976), Porteous (1976), Ley (1977), and Seamon (1979) began research into life worlds and place by describing insider/outsider divisions, networks of concern within a place, sacred space, home, homeland, habit fields and a variety of other phenomena which fall under the general idea of sense of place. Most of these authors have continued to refine their ideas. All the work is phenomenological in nature and focuses on the homes and horizons of a great variety of peoples. Clearly, the essence of this corpus of work comes to bear directly on the questions and problems delineated in this thesis.

There is, however, a problem with the bulk of sense of place research, namely that it is rarely based on primary field work. Tuan, for example, writes lyrically about sense of place, drawing from the mythology and traditions of a wide diversity of cultures, but in the end, one cannot ground his work in any one place. As such, the concepts are strong, but the work is almost too clean, not concerning itself with politics or the interactions within and between cultures. Studies focusing specifically on empirical bases of sense of place, like that of Hay (1986) in the Cowichan Valley in British Columbia, are relatively rare in the literature of human geography.

Perhaps the most penetrating works about people/place relationships have been written in the last decade and have to do with symbolic representations of landscape. Dansereau (1975) was among the first to pick up on Hopkins' theme of symbolic *inscape*, writing not about physical settings but about landscapes of the imagination. *Humanistic Geography and Literature* (Pocock 1981) revisits the regional novel and considers anew the role of imagination in geographic analysis. Meinig's seminal paper "Geography as an art" is central to this line of inquiry inasmuch as he writes about the discipline's *need* to reconceptualize itself as an art as well as a science, and thereby overcome what he calls "chronic insecurity" (Meinig 1983: 314). This kind of thinking has released geographers interested in literature from the temptation to *mine* literature for specific references to places, allowing them instead to look for place nuance written between the lines (Osborne 1988). *Geography and Literature* (Mallory and Simpson-Housley 1987) takes this idea a step further into engendered, symbolic, metaphoric and surrealistic landscapes. Porteous (1990) extends this line even further. But perhaps the most creative and interesting investigations of people's symbolic understandings of place arise from writers who have gone beyond literature into the lived worlds, art, popular culture, language and iconography of everyday interactions between people and place (i.e. Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Jackson 1989: Moss 1990; and Tuan 1990)

It is this line of thinking in geography, following on earlier work by Harris (1979, 1987), that has enabled the disciplinary lines between geography and anthropology to blur, allowing a body of ethnographic writing about people's relationship with place to cross over into geography (i.e. Geertz 1973, 1988; Clifford and Marcus 1986; and Marcus and Fischer 1986). According to Cosgrove and Jackson (1987) the result of this is as follows:

> Conceptualizing landscapes as configurations of symbols and signs leads inevitably towards methodologies which are more interpretive than strictly morphological. Among the commonly favored are those associated with post-war developments in linguistics and semiotics. This interpretive strand in recent cultural geography develops the metaphor of landscape as "text" to be read or interpreted as a social document in the same way that Clifford Geertz describes anthropology as the interpretation of cultural texts. (96)

It is thinking like this that places writing in so-called "radical cultural geography" (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987), and "new-ethnography" (Pelto 1970; Geertz 1988) well within the territory of this study. There is more to be said about the latter in a moment when the methodological approach to the question is discussed.

And there is also cross fertilization of geography from a parallel shift in science. Like human geography, a branch of environmental science has moved away from traditional ecology to deep ecology and social ecology. New writing from science making its way into the geographic literature is by so-called "deep ecologists" (i.e. deGroh 1987; and LaChapelle 1988) and focuses on the relationships between people and the natural world. Deep ecological writing focuses on attitudes toward environment, similar to Bailes' *Environmental History* (Bailes 1985), but is more damning of anthropocentric attitudes to conservation and management of the natural world. The main criticism of deep ecology's failure to reconcile humans as *the* major source of *natural* change on the planet is put forward by environmental writers calling themselves "social ecologists" (i.e. Bookchin 1981a, 1981b, and 1990).

Bookchin and others are being cited with increasing regularity by geographers exploring interactive notions of people/place relationships under the broad heading of bioregionalism. Recent work in this field suggests that understanding how people bond to where they live and work is central to making informed decisions about how and to what final purpose land will be used. Coates and Coates argue that:

> ... without understanding the land and the cultural adaptation to it, political action even if it arises from the grass roots, is likely to make problems worse. The politics of place must be firmly rooted in the consciousness of place (1988: 77).

It is the integration of people and place and politics that makes this literature attractive for my study. Two central features separate this literature from the literature of place and the literature of landscape: its integrated look at the politics of people/place relationships; and the fact that much of this work is grounded in particular regions in case-study fashion. The central premise of bioregional analysis is that real understandings of place cannot emerge until and unless people of an area understand their history and the effects of the land on that history (i.e. Coates & Coates 1981; Berry 1985; and Atlantic Centre 1986).

Barry Lopez has written about bioregionalism (Lopez 1986, 1989) as have other quasi-geographical writers (i.e. Anderson 1986; Berry 1985). But the people doing primary research under the heading of bioregionalism are producing work that is most like that which I hoped to do in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* (White 1980) and *Water, Earth and Fire: Land Use and Environmental Planning in the New Jersey Pine Barrens* (Berger and Sinton 1985) are two very interesting studies of localized geographic areas that tease out various cultural attitudes toward land and how they interplay. White, for example, explores the lives and values of Indians, farmers, loggers, promoters and tourists who lived on two small islands in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, southeast of Vancouver Island. Although this study focuses on how each of these constituencies shaped the land—and in that sense is exactly backwards to the ideal of this proposal—White, and other writers with a bioregional slant, are of potentially great value.

A recent study which illustrates the possible power in a bioregional approach is a master's thesis entitled "Landscape Imagery and Environmental Communications in Newfoundland" (Noel 1987). Noel set out to explore the range of attitudes toward the Newfoundland environment by probing songs, fiction, popular literature and conversations with Newfoundlanders. She invoked the insider/outsider distinction from place literature as a first major distinction in people's perspectives about Newfoundland landscape. Although Noel never really escaped from her own perspective as a serious conservationist herself, the thesis does show the promise of an interdisciplinary, bioregional approach, and also provides useful methodological insights. Of particular interest to me is the set of bipolar concepts, derived from the insider/outsider literature, that she employed in a novel form of content analysis for the diverse data sources she used. This distinction will prove useful to this study.

Perhaps the most exciting development in explorations of people/place relationships is a renaissance of thinking about the spiritual nature of the ties that bind people to place. My own recent writing (Raffan 1990) touches on spiritual themes in people/place relationships. In fact, the central motif in *Summer North of Sixty* is a concept called "nativity," meaning the extent to which people feel they belong, or are native, to a particular place. Nativity goes well beyond the insider/outsider distinction used by Noel and others to explore sense of place, partly because it is grounded in personal experience, but mostly because it is also drawn from extended exploration of native conceptions of land and place. Nativity becomes a key connection for me that links my own Celtic understandings and past experience on the land with the results of this investigation.

In the final analysis, literature about environmental spirituality is of critical importance for two reasons: 1) it potentially liberates research from the evidentiary rules of science; 2) including this category of thinking in the investigation leaves open the possibility that spirituality is important in people/place relationships, and it implicitly vivifies the contention that any complete understanding of people's relationship with place must go beyond space, time and function and into rather more metaphysical levels of thinking and analysis (i.e.

Shepard 1967; Tuan 1976a, 1978; Franks 1988; Raffan and Horwood 1988; and Richardson 1989).

Scanning the available literature of place, there are possibly three authors (perhaps only two) who have found their way into the essential nature of place, as I have come to understand this type of knowledge through this study. The possible third is Rob Shields (1991) who, in struggling through social theory to find "alternative geographies of modernity," comes as close as a person might with so- called *outer* geographic knowledge to advancing understandings about how individual people derive meaning from land. In the end, however, Shields avoids the messy business of people's perceptions, opting instead to deal with large social structures and drawing from the elite French geographic school, with the esoteric (but interesting) notions of *habitus*, *dispositif*, and *dialectic of space.* The other two authors who seem to have recognized the internal nature of place knowledge and who have found ways to bring that knowledge to the surface of the written page are Porteous (1990) and Tuan (1991).

In the seminal work *Landscapes of the Mind: Worlds of sense and metaphor*, Douglas Porteous begins with Gerard Manley Hopkins' notion of *inscape* and seems to recognize that essential business of people's bonds with place, namely that, while they may be represented in material structures on the surface of the earth, the essence of sense of place is something that is well buried in the human mind. He writes:

> We are, at root, alienated, and thus estranged from our authentic possibilities. In particular, we are increasingly alienated from our sensual and imaginative possibilities. We are alienated, too, from a world we collectively have too much power over, a world we universally confront in only a visual way. For vision is the most detached of the senses; its end result is "landscape," something we stand back to view. Vision encourages objec-

> tivity in a world that cries out for involvement, empathy, and the deeper meaningfulness that comes with a heightening, as in children and other animals, of the non-visual senses. And we are alienated from ourselves as well as from others. Giddy with entertainment, sated with consumer goods, and planned to death, we devote little time to exploring the *paysage intérieur*, the convoluted, intricate, and always rewarding landscape of our minds. (xiv)

Place, it appears, is an amalgam of sensual and imaginative possibilities. Just as Waterston (1973) argues for the existence of internal hooks in literature, and as anthropologists set out spirituality in apposition to so-called *material* worlds, I agree with Porteous' contention that if one wishes to explore people's connections to land, people's sense of place, one must enter and explore Hopkins' and Dansereau's *inscape* or the "smellscapes," "soundscapes," and "otherscapes" of Porteous' *paysage intérieur.* As a portent of eventual conclusions from this work, I feel it appropriate to say at this point that it appears that sense of place has to do with how people define themselves spatially, which makes this project about edges. I have found that *place*—people's bonds to land—constitutes an existential expression or definition of who you are and that the veracity of the force a person might exert to fight for a place is directly connected to the extent to which the person is attached to, or defined by, a particular piece of land.

At this point it is of value to link back to Porteous and his mind-embedded notion of landscape. Porteous writes:

> Landscape, whether in the physical environment or in the form of a painting, does not exist without an observer. Although the land exists, the *scape* is a projection of human consciousness.[6]

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[6] Porteous, page 4, but he takes the idea from Erlich (1987) "Surrender to landscape." *Harper's* **275**, 24-27.

And it is through this internal notion of landscape—landscape of the mind—that one can appreciate the wisdom of a maxim that came my way via John Wadland who said, "landscape is the autobiography of place."[7] But more than Wadland, more than Porteous, it is Yi-Fu Tuan who has been and remains at the centre of the articulation of sense of place.

Tuan's most recent writing also acknowledges the internal nature of sense of place, and gives some useful direction in setting out a course of research to uncover sense of place. Tuan asserts that a central task for geographers is to understand the "making and maintenance of place" (Tuan 1991: 684). He goes on to identify the key role that language plays in the creation of place. But in turning his attention to language in place-creation, Tuan points out a fundamental shortcoming in geographers' conception of the intellectual makeup of place. "Geographers and landscape historians (and, I believe, people in general)" he writes, "tend to see place almost exclusively as the result of the material transformation of nature" (684). In making this observation of place research and the nature of place, Tuan, in his own way, is pointing to what might be called the *internality* of place constructs, for next to ritual and social custom (which are also bound in language) there is probably nothing more internal to a culture than its language. The words of people, we can take from Tuan, are a crucial link to their sense of place. Unfortunately (and this is a fact that has essentially stymied place research from going beyond theoretical postulates to empirical research) language is one of the most expensive, time consuming and difficult aspects of culture to ascertain, because this is the point at which a geographer must leave the library or the laboratory and walk the land to *talk* to the people who live on it. This is the point at which geography crosses into ethnology and cultural anthropology. This is a line few geographers have been willing, for whatever reasons, to cross. But, in laying out three possible approaches to linguistic place-construction, Tuan dispenses with linguistics—the nature of language itself— and sociolinguistics—the use and effectiveness of speech in particular social contexts— in favour of a third approach which he calls "narrative descriptive." Partly by the nature of the questions asked in this research, partly as a result of embracing the methods and assumptions of anthropology, and partly by serendipity, the methodological stance of this research finds much resonance in Tuan's writing in late 1991.

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[7] Dr. Wadland is Head of the Canadian Studies Department at Trent University and, in addition to co-supervising a independent study that was part of my doctoral program, was an important advisor to the development of this research. This comment about landscape as autobiography of place was made during an informal conversation in October, 1991.

Tuan, who has for his whole professional career been a champion of holistic, interdisciplinary research (not without substantial criticism, especially during the height of the positivist revolution in geography in the mid-1970s), comes to the conclusion that narrative-descriptive place construction is the way to essential truths about people's attachment to land. He writes:

> [The] narrative-descriptive [approach] draws on the first two approaches, absorbing them into its story line, without pausing for theoretical overviews or going into analytical detail. All narratives and descriptions contain at least interpretive and explanatory stratagems, for these are built into language itself. In a narrative-descriptive approach, however, the explicit formulation of theory is not attempted, if only because such a theory, by its clarity and weight, tends to drive rival and complementary interpretations and explanatory sketches out of mind, with the result that the object of study—a human experience, which is almost always ambiguous and complex—turns into something schematic and etiolated. Indeed, in social science, a theory can be so highly structured that it seems to exist in its own right, to be almost "solid," and thus able to cast (paradoxically) a shadow over the phenomena it is intended to illuminate. By contrast, in the narrative descriptive approach, theories hover supportively in the back-

> ground while the complex phenomena themselves occupy the front stage. For this reason, the approach is favoured by cultural and historical geographers, historians generally, and cultural anthropologists—scholars who are predisposed to appreciate the range and colour of life and world. Their best works tend to make a reader feel the intellectual pleasure of being exposed to a broad and variegated range of related facts and of understanding them a little better (though still hazily), rather than, as in specialized theoretical works, the intellectual assurance of being offered a rigorous explanation of necessarily narrow and highly abstracted segment of reality. (Tuan 1991: 686)

Tuan chooses to go to published sources exclusively for his examples to illustrate the power of language to understand the creation of place, but from his recent writing I take inspiration to seek out—through oral testimony—the words of the people about the places in which they live. And buttressed by recent writing of others who have been thinking about the construction of cultural representations of place (i.e. Porteous 1990; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Andrews 1990; Cruikshank 1990; and Astbury 1990), there is reason to think that the most sensible way in which to proceed from here in this dissertation is with a narrative-descriptive approach to the material, to proceed in a discursive fashion, highlighting the patterns and the ambiguities, instead of trying to push for some grand social theory to package and possibly distort perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

The alternative to the narrative-descriptive approach in this case would be to go back into the earlier literature of place for theoretical constructs related to place, such as Wright's notions of geopiety (1966) and geosophy (1947), Relph's conceptions of place (1976) and rational landscapes (1981), or Tuan's idea of topophilia (1974a, 1977), through which to examine the findings of this investigation. Not only are these of questionable intrinsic relevance to the circumstances of this research, current writing on the subject of place, especially that of Porteous, Tuan and Shields, makes a rather more discursive exploration of the place-texts of the Thelon more in line with recent developments in place thinking.

The Approach

The method of this research was to collect for analysis *every* available impression of the barrenlands in general and of the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular. This included thorough archive and library searches, as well as personal experience with the place and visits to and travel with Chipewyan Dene from Lutsel K'e and Caribou Inuit from Qamanittuaq, who both have historic and contemporary knowledge of the Barrens. The standard academic part of the investigation and analysis is informed by the methods, techniques and assumptions of humanistic and cultural geography, and of sound scholarly research. Finding a guide for the field portion of the work and for subsequent analysis of field findings is not so clear cut. But that this study *must* be grounded in the field is a personal bias and assumption that forges alliances with giants like Braudel, who wrote:

> There is no point in talking theoretically about the diversity of France: you must see it with your own eyes, take in the colours and smells, touch it with your own hands, eat and drink it, to get its authentic flavour. ... As a general rule it is better to take the minor roads ... for they are the most beautiful in the world: splendidly laid out, they follow the lie of the land and speak the very language of the contours. One should stop often. And if you share my personal taste, watch out especially for the breaks in continuity, the frontier zones.[8]

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[8] From *The Identity of France: Volume One, History and Environment* (Braudel 1988: 50-51).

Recent writing on methodological issues in ethnography gives guidance in this area. Important works include *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* (Clifford and Marcus 1986), *Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An experimental moment in the human sciences* (Marcus and Fischer 1986) and *Horizons in Human Geography* (Gregory and Walford 1989). These books all tackle the difficult problems of voice and perspective in exemplary ethnographic work, and lay out a standard of practice and code of moral and professional expectations that anyone planning on doing ethnographic work currently cannot ignore.

In an important northern contextualization of this writing in the area of so-called "new ethnography," Cruikshank (1988) set in place the grounding principle of *collaboration* for this research. She writes:

> Anthropologists no longer have the power to unilaterally decide where and how they will do fieldwork. Instead, research strategies negotiated locally and based on a model of **collaboration** are replacing more conventional models of university-initiated research. (28)

Cruikshank, along with Geertz, Marcus and Fisher, and other players in new ethnography, emphasizes the centrality of collaboration, but also the importance of writing in the process and of what Geertz calls a "serious" pun, namely the importance of being a convincing "I" in any eye-witness account of another culture (Geertz 1988: 79).[9]

The licencing procedure now in place in the Northwest Territories helps establish collaborative relationships between university-based and community-based contributors to research. In the licencing process, conversations referring to community contributors as "consultants" as opposed to *informants* indicates simply the changing traditions in subarctic anthropology. But the key step in the new process is that *any* research undertaken in northern native communities is now predicated on community approval and support of the work. In other words, communities like Lutsel K'e, rankled by researchers who have taken lots and left little, have the right to demand that there be something in the work for them. Although the process of getting underway with such strictures on the work made start-up a necessarily plastic and time-consuming venture, the result has been very satisfying. Through consultation with the communities, we were able to negotiate circumstances of mutual benefit in the project.

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[9] Additional methodological notes are detailed in Appendix One.

In Lutsel K'e, we agreed that tapes, transcripts, and written products from the project would be kept in the band office. Money from the research paid a variety of people for their assistance, including a small gift and honorarium for the elders who contributed, money to pay a guide for the annual snowmobile run to the Thelon Game Sanctuary, and funds to charter a Twin Otter aircraft to establish a gas cache to support that expedition. The band contributed a day-time translator and office space to the project, and provided an advisor, the local Chipewyan Language Co-ordinator, with whom arrangements are on-going in the process of getting the fruits of the research into curriculum documents and other products for the Lutsel K'e school.

In Qamanittuaq, the hamlet council eventually supported the work but was not nearly as interested as the band council in Lutsel K'e about what was in the research for them. The person in town who was working on an oral history project supported the work and was pleased to receive tapes and transcripts of all conversations. But, in addition to consultants, who again were provided with a small honorarium and small gift for their time and trouble, and a translator who was paid for his excellent services, the two community organizations that seemed most interested in collaborating with the research in Qamanittuaq were the local historical society and the Keewatin District Board of Education. The historical society was very interested in the research and offered to do what it could to support: members of the society were key consultants. And the school board took a great interest, resulting in negotiations that led to an agreement to produce an illustrated booklet entitled *Voices from the Land* that will feature stories from project transcripts illustrated by artwork by children from the Qamanittuaq school.

The basic approach to trying to answer the fundamental questions of this doctoral investigation was to employ the means and resources necessary to encounter and interpret as many different perspectives on one piece of Canadian land as possible. In addition to conventional library research and the methods of classical cultural anthropology involving note taking and audio recording of conversations, extensive use was made of photography and creative journal keeping[10] to gather information for this investigation. My own work on the role of journals on an archaeological expedition (Raffan and Barrett 1989), combined with Porteous' (1990) push to access poetic and artistic ways of knowing in investigations of place, made the production of a creative journal a logical step to take in this exploration of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. In each of three cultural areas the texts[11] fall into three main categories: existing published perspectives; spoken perspectives; and ethnographic accounts of the people who know the place well. The beauty of the culture-as-text metaphor is aptly stated by Marcus and Fischer:

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[10] The idea of visual and poetic processing of experience through keeping a creative journal throughout the tenure of this investigation was derived from the work of Progoff (1975), Rainer (1982), Fulwiler (1987), Hammond (1988a, 1988b), and Keen (1989) who have all contributed to the development of knowledge about journals as a reflective tool.

> social activities can be "read" for their meanings by the observer just as written and spoken materials conventionally are. What's more, not only the ethnographer reads the symbols in action, but so do the observed—actors in relation to one another (Marcus and Fischer 1986: 26).

In the course of seeking out *every* impression of the Barrens in general and the Thelon Game Sanctuary, inevitably, as might have been expected, sources turned up that didn't fit easily into any of these categories—artwork, fictional writing, poetry and the like; and equally predictable perhaps, consultants turned up, like Metis Land Use Planner Trevor Teed, trapper Gus D'Aoust and outfitter Alex Hall, who didn't fit neatly into the cultural categories as assigned. Nevertheless, all of these sources were considered with a method that was as simple as it was powerful.

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[11] It was Geertz who first introduced the notion of "text" into the anthropological literature, and in doing so clearly signalled the shift in perspective from anthropological efforts to *represent* human enterprise, in any definitive sense, to a more interactive process of *evocation* of the forms and patterns of other cultures. The key concept in the idea of meaningful action, as captured by a researcher on paper, tape, or on film, is involvement of the reader, as well as the writer and person or object of the writing, in anthropological literature. It was setting out findings as text that allows Geertz to characterize what he called "thick description." Others have gone on to highlight the processes by which human behaviour and beliefs become text. Clifford writes: "Textualization ... is the process through which unwritten behaviour, speech, beliefs, oral tradition, and ritual come to be marked as a corpus, a potentially meaningful ensemble separated out from an immediate discursive or performative situation" (Clifford 1988: 38). In this study, by considering written materials, observations and voices as *text*, I wish to signal the assumption that every impression of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, while context-specific at the instant of its inclusion into this study, is in reality some small measure of a greater cultural whole, subject to interpretation by reader as well as writer.

PART II: EXPRESSIONS of PLACE

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Three Interfaces with a Northern Land

Of the many people around the globe who value the barrenlands in general, and the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular, there are three main groups that reside inside Canada. To the west are the Chipewyan Dene who traditionally have left their homes below the treeline and venturered onto the Barrens to hunt caribou, wolf, and white fox in the vicinity of the Thelon River. To the east are the Caribou Inuit who have travelled into the Thelon River valley to hunt caribou at summer crossing places and to gather wood for boats and sleds. And to the south are people of European extraction—biologists, geologists, conservationists, recreational canoeists and adventurers—who have been drawn north for a great variety of reasons. Thus, for the purposes of this study there are fundamentally three cultural interfaces with the land in question: Chipewyan Dene; Caribou Inuit; and Euro-Canadian.

For each of these groups there are three types of text that describe the interfaces. There are written texts, meaning existing published materials written by members of the three groups. There are texts derived from experiences with people of each culture in and around the barrenlands—so-called experiential texts. And there are texts derived from transcriptions of the voices of the people themselves. In the case of the Dene and Inuit, the available written texts are scanty compared to those of the dominant culture. As such, in some cases, I have opted, when appropriate, to substitute writing *about* the Dene and/or Inuit perspectives in lieu of writing *by* members of these cultural groups. In other cases, written materials apply to more than one cultural group, and in these situations I have endeavoured to present the material in a way that makes it easy for the reader to comprehend. Sans serif type has been used to signal the voices of contributors who know the Barrens best. Basically, what follows are chapters on each of these three groups, broken down into written, experiential and spoken texts describing the three main interfaces between people and this vast northern land.

Expressions of Place: Chipewyan Dene

Written Texts

To appreciate written Chipewyan perspectives on land it is necessary to understand that it has only been in the last 15-20 years that words of any Dene have been committed to paper. It has only been since the early 1970s, with the advent of the northern land claim process, that Indian people who knew the Thelon area came forward to speak about their lands. Prior to that, everything written about Chipewyan perspectives on land was second hand—accounts that say as much (or more) about the observer's perspective as about that of the observed. Therefore, the written texts of most value to this investigation are all current, published or set to paper in the contemporary era, but in these contemporary voices are ideas that are as elegant as the words bearing them are simply stated. Consider the following:

> It is very clear to me that it is an important and special thing to be an Indian. Being an Indian means being able to understand and live with this world in a very special way. It means living with the land, with the animals, with the birds and fish, as though they were your sisters and brothers. It means saying the land is an old friend and an old friend your father knew, your grandfather knew, indeed your people have always known. We see our land as much, much more than the whiteman sees it. To the Indian people our land is really our life. Without our land we...could no longer exist.[12]

> The land is part of you. It's in you. To take it away makes you sick. You are not well. It's like taking away a part of you.[13]

> I am 60 years old and my land means a lot to me. The native people never went out south to claim somebody else's land or country. The Whiteman comes here and I

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[12] Richard Nerysoo, as quoted in Berger (1977: 94).

[13] Neil Colin (1989), as quoted in Andrews (1990: 3)

> can't see what he has to say about the land around here. The land was here a long time before the white man ever saw the North.[14]

> But, wherever we go, we always see old signs, from long ago. We know that long before us this country has been used ... People still using it. We belong to it, we belong to the land and we look at it like that land is our mother. That's where we're born and that's where we're going to go back. We're going to be part of this land when we die. There is no way we're going to leave it. That's why we think of this land. What else we got? Just land, land is our bank, it's our living, it's everything. Everything we got is this land.[15]

> Chipewyan and Dogrib elders describe the Thelon River as "where God began when the world was created."[16]

Although Hearne, Franklin, Hanbury and other European explorers encountered Chipewyan people on their travels, their accounts of the people and the land are fundamentally outsiders' views and as such are considered in the next chapter. The first full ethnographic accounts focussing specifically on the Snowdrift Chipewyan (VanStone 1960, 1963, 1965) are badly flawed by the imposition of categories of analysis which do not make sense and by unsubstantiated generalizations. Indeed, the work concludes with the statement, "It is certainly safe to say ... that there is very little that is distinctively Chipewyan which remains a part of present-day Snowdrift life." (VanStone 1965: 111)

Since VanStone, there has been more ethnographic work done on more southerly Chipewyan bands[17] and there have been a number of popular accounts of the Chipewyan (i.e. Rogers 1970; Jenness 1972) that establish historical and contemporary use of the Thelon watershed and make some mention of land use practices and material culture, but which contain nothing of the voices of the Chipewyans themselves and very little in terms of land perceptions that might come to bear on this investigation.[18]

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[14] Gregory Shae, as quoted in *Dehcho* (Dene Cultural Institute 1989: 47).

[15] Willie MacDonald, as quoted in *Dehcho* (Dene Cultural Institute 1989: 47).

[16] A comment by Metis land use researcher Trevor Teed (1990: 1).

[17] See Smith (1984) for a comprehensive summary.

As with the Inuit, land claims in the early 1970s led to a series of new initiatives to document Dene land use practices and patterns. The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry raised Indian awareness of the importance of documenting their attachment to the land. Although Snowdrift Chipewyan contributed to the process (Berger 1977), formal hearings were never conducted in Lutsel K'e.

However, the Berger Commission's emphasis on native testimonials and community hearings about how land was to be used, was either part of, or caused, a substantial change in how native land information was to be represented from that point on. Emphasis on getting the people themselves to speak about possible threats against their land led to an emergence and gradual strengthening of Dene voices, including Chipewyan voices, on a variety of topics. Comments by Richard Nerysoo, quoted earlier, are a classic example of this trend.

In the late 1970s, the Canadian Parks Service was interested in Chipewyan views concerning the possible establishment of a national park on the east arm of Great Slave Lake. In a public transcript of one of those encounters, Lutsel K'e elder Zepp Casaway was quoted as saying the following:

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[18] Smith (1984) shows clearly a gradual southward shift in lands used by the Chipewyan from 1716 to 1890. Prior to contact, maps show Chipewyan use of the Thelon almost as far as Beverly Lake (272). By 1870 the lands of the Chipewyan have shifted southward into the provinces and have drawn back to occupy only the headwater regions of the Thelon. By 1890, it would appear from Smith's maps that almost no Chipewyans were using the upper Thelon and apparently none were going into what would soon become the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

> Years ago, when people from the south began to come to our land in great numbers, the government drew up a treaty which was signed by the Dene.[19] This treaty was made to ensure peace between the Dene and those who came to our country. It was an agreement to work together in a spirit of co-operation and harmony. The agreement did not mention land and it is on that understanding that we agreed to accept treaty payment from the government. Now the government is asking us for land. We continue to say no to this request. White people have their own land in the south. The land here belongs to the Dene. The Creator made this land for our use. He does not want us to dispute over land. I don't want a park either. The land is suitable for our needs the way it is now. We are making our livelihood on it as it now exists. We don't want people from the south to come to make plans for our land. This land has not changed. It continues the same. The animals, birds and fish have been put on the land and it is still that way. We are careful in the way we treat the land. We look after the land. We don't want fires to destroy our land. That is why we ask the government for money to fight forest fires. I live on the land. It provides for my needs. I have tried to grow potatoes but they won't grow here. I do not want to give away my land. Many people don't want to have a park. They don't want to talk about it. The land belongs to me. If anyone wants to spoil it I feel compelled to talk to him. You love your families and I love my family. It is of no use for us to argue. The land won't destroy itself in the next ten years. Only people can do that. It could stay the way it is. We will continue to allow people from the south to come and visit our land—not to use for many years—just for a few days and then they will go back to where they come from. If the chief wants another meeting about this he will write about it on a paper. The people of Snowdrift use this area in summer and in winter. There is an abundance of animals in this country—in the barren lands to the east and in the forests on this side. I am pleased that you came to talk about a park but we do not want any park for now. Pack up your map and go. Thank you. (Casaway 1981)

People on the periphery of this and other land claim processes garnered insights into native conceptions of land that slowly made their way into the literature. For example Bayly, a lawyer involved in the process, wrote in a Yellowknife newspaper column:

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[19] The treaty to which Zepp Casaway refer is probably Treaty No. 8, made June 21, 1899. This treaty and its adhesions cover the bulk of lands in northern Alberta, with triangular portions of British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories (up to the south shore of Great Slave Lake) included as well. The uncertainty about which treaty applies to the people of Lutsel K'e comes from the fact that while most communities are mentioned by name in the treaty documents, Snowdrift does not appear. However, Chipewyan peoples in the vicinity of the south shore of Great Slave Lake were signatories to this treaty. If the people of Lutsel K'e were not included in Treaty No. 8, they most likely were included in Treaty No. 11, which was made on June 27, 1921. In either case, however, lands ceded under both treaties do not extend east of the western shore of Artillery Lake.

> In Lutsel K'e I saw for the first time that maps, which for me are merely tools to be folded, marked and otherwise used up, are something more for those who live on the land. For four old gentlemen in the Lutsel K'e Community Hall, maps are pictures of something sacred—stained glass windows if you like. Illuminated by the sunshine of their memories and the shared experience reflected in their weathered faces I began to see that there is something ... yes, something holy about maps. (Bayly 1988: 5)

One of the strongest contributions to the strengthening of native perspectives in the literature is that by members of the Dene/Metis Mapping Project, notably Thomas A. Andrews (1988a, 1988b, 1990). Although Andrews and others did a great deal of interviewing and land use mapping in preparation for a Dene/Metis comprehensive land claim, nothing resulted that was as substantial as the three-volume *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project* (Freeman 1976). Andrews, however, pressed on with his own oral history and Dene mapping work and has produced the most exciting and interesting work on Dene conceptions of land to date.

Quoting extensively from Dene consultants to whom he has spoken over the years, Andrews' latest paper, *Yamoria's Arrows: Stories, Place-Names and the Land in Dene Oral Tradition*, sets out a [illegible]able synthesis of his findings. In particular, he points to the centrality of place names and narrative and the interconnectedness of life, knowledge, culture and the land itself in Dene conceptions of place. He writes:

> Place-names commemorate more than landmarks. Through narrative associated with a place, they reflect aspects of culture which imbue the location with meaning. In this regard they are mnemonic devices or mechanisms used to recall the meaning inherent in the narrative.
>
> Narratives contain the teaching of past generations, and may be seen as repositories of knowledge and social rules relevant to the cultural setting.

> Landscape may be viewed as a collection of symbols which record local knowledge and meaning, and where place-names become memory aids for recalling the relevance of a "message" encoded in associated narratives. Physical geography is transformed into a "social geography" where culture and landscape are fused into a semiotic whole. In essence, one cannot exist without the other. (Andrews 1990: 3-8)

Andrews' work has done much to lay a solid foundation for the respectability of stories and oral history investigations in land research.[20] One begins to look more carefully, for example, at the published symbols and descriptions of the Dene Nation logo. Figure 2 on page 47 shows the logo that was derived from the following story:

Yamoria's Arrows

Many years ago, before the whiteman came into this country, a special man Yamoria travelled into this land. He put everything into its rightful place. The animals and human beings were separated from each other. Whatever was harmful to people was gotten rid of. By doing this, he had set laws for our people to follow. Until this very day, we are still holding onto them.

This story had come about when there were large beavers living in Great Bear Lake (Sahtu).

The beavers were harmful to the people living in this area. People that lived in this area would travel across the lake by canoe to hunt the caribou. The beavers did not like them to travel across the lake so they would get as close as possible and splash their tails hoping to tip the canoes over. In this way they would be getting rid of the people. When Yamoria heard about that, he went to Bear Lake and told the people that he would be chasing the beavers away.

Yamoria started chasing the beavers around the lake. The big beavers immediately went down to Bear River. The younger ones were harder to chase towards the river. During the time that Yamoria was chasing the younger ones around the lake, the bigger beavers had built a dam on the river and that's where the Bear River rapids are to this very day. Yamoria got the younger ones to head down to the Bear River and then chased them all down the river to where Fort Norman is now situated.

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[20] Elsewhere (Dene Cultural Institute 1989), Yamoria, or Yampa Deja is explained as meaning "the one who travels all over creation," or "the eternal traveller."

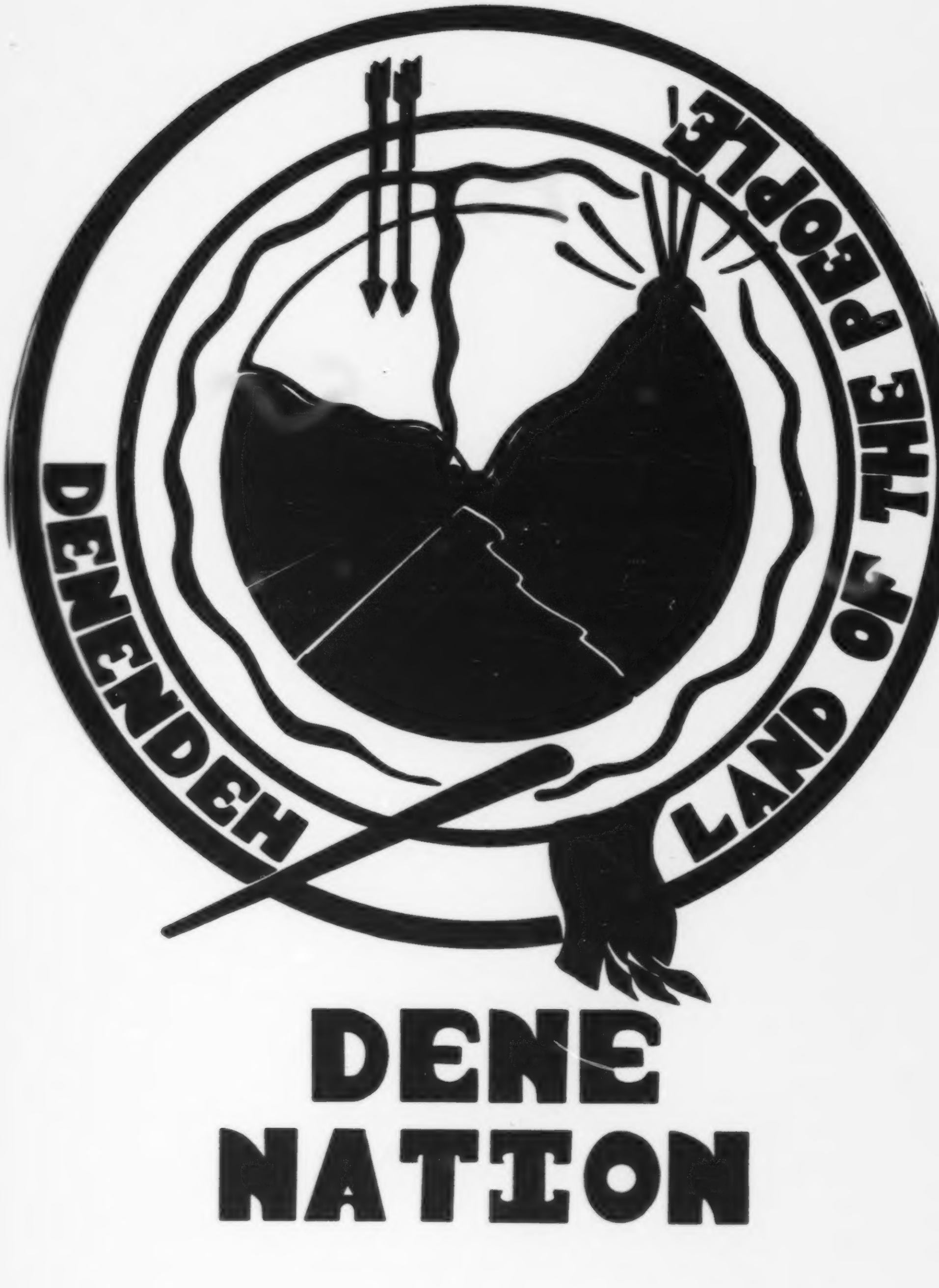
DENENDEH
LAND OF THE PEOPLE
DENE
NATION

Figure 2. **Dene Nation Logo:** From a story told by George Blondin (1990: 30- 31) about the legend of Yamoria, this logo serves to symbolize the relationship between Denendeh ("the land of the people") and the Dene ("the people").

At the confluence of the two rivers, Bear River and Dehcho, he killed two medium beavers and one small one. The larger ones continued down the Great River.

After killing the three beavers, he stretched and nailed the three hides on the south face of Bear Rock Mountain. You can still see them to this very day.

While he was doing that—the two larger beavers that continued on down the Great River had built two more rapids.

After he had finished with those beavers that he had killed at Fort Norman, he then continued on chasing the other two larger beavers down the Great River.

From the top of Bear Rock Mountain, he shot two arrows at the confluence of the two rivers and he said, "as long as this earth shall last you shall call them Yamoria's arrows." Still to this day you can see two big poles sticking out of the river.

After shooting the two arrows into the river he brought the beavers that he shot with him up the Great River about 20 miles from the confluence. There he slept and where he had cooked the beavers, the grease that had drizzled from the beavers started to burn and until to this very day that fire continues to burn.

There are some legends that state that during your travel at night by that site, if you can see the fire coming out then you would live a very long life. This they say that it's not always visible for everyone, just a few.

According to Stanley Isiah of Fort Simpson, the symbol of the three beaver pelts on Bear Rock Mountain, the forever burning fire up river from that mountain are signs of the land set there as a reminder of the teachings of the legends. Stanley said that if we remember the teachings of the legends and live them, if we take the sign set on the land for us as our symbol, we will never have any trouble surviving as a nation.

Chipewyan voices are emerging as well through publications concerning the harvest of game. *A Way of Life* (Hall 1986) and *The Book of Dene* (NWT Department of Education 1985) are two examples that deal with hunting, setting traps, and other land skills. Driven in part by a need to commit traditional knowledge to paper for the benefit of young native people, and also in part by the threat to the traditional way of life posed by the international anti-fur lobby, these books are now part of the growing record of Dene views of land.

One of the best examples of such publications is a collaborative effort entitled *People and Caribou* and published by the GNWT Department of Renewable Resources (Hall 1989). The "caribou" part of this book is written by biologists and is of a technical nature. What sets this book apart from earlier works about the wildlife of the NWT, however, is the fact that instead of mentioning in passing that Inuit and Dene people depend on these animals, there are chapters on how caribou have been used through time; on the making of clothing from caribou; on clothing; on nutrition; and a chapter on stories and legends involving the caribou. To understand Chipewyan views of land, one must appreciate the caribou's role in connecting them to that land.

There are two beautifully illustrated Dene stories in this volume. I present one here as an example of a Dene voice emerging in a public document on caribou. Stories in this form and published in this way are particularly exciting because of the fact that they represent the dawning in public consciousness of another way of knowing and valuing a resource such as caribou.

Caribou Medicine

My grandfather was one of the top medicine men in the country. He had medicine for every living thing in the world, including space, wind, trees, everything that grows, everything. Medicine is something that comes unbidden to people, not because they want it, it comes from nature or God. Nobody can explain it and most people don't talk about it because it's sacred to them. They die with it, they don't say how they possessed it.

But my grandfather didn't like it. He came from Aklavik originally and he was there when the first white men came into the country. When the first priest came to Aklavik, my grandfather went to see him. He said, "I am very powerful myself, but I don't like what I have, I'd like to get rid of it. I'd like to live like ordinary people. It's not my fault I'm this way, somebody or something pushed it on me. Even before I was born I had it. I picked my own mother and all this power came into the world with me."

But the priest told him he couldn't do anything about it, all he could do was pray over him and tell him to try not to use it. So grandfather took his advice and he was pretty quiet about it all his life. He did some wonderful things—in trapping and killing things other people couldn't, he also helped the poor and healed the sick. There were other medicine men too, who did exercise their power. Medicine was very important in those days, just like money is today. If you had it, you felt good; if you didn't have it, you didn't feel good. My grandfather had grandchildren, for instance, and their parents wanted them to sleep with him so they would receive some of medicine power. Three boys, one of them my father, slept with him and they all got some, which they do exercise sometimes.

In 1926, however, a great disaster came upon the Dene people of the NWT. Before then, all Dene depended on medicine, all their laws and culture were based on medicine power. At that time there were only four top medicine men in the NWT and they controlled all the other medicine people. But in 1926 two of them quarrelled in public. One accused the other, saying, "You killed my son." They threatened each other, and one of them said, "If you kill me, I will take all the medicine people with me." Three days later they both got sick and died, one in the morning and the other in the evening. That was when the great flu epidemic started. Over half of the Dene population of the NWT died, most of them medicine people. Today we have very few medicine people left.

To be a strong medicine person you have to go and live by medicine laws. All Dene culture comes from this medicine. Today people no longer follow medicine laws because our lifestyle has changed so much. Today people just live like ordinary people. Medicine power is just a memory.

My grandfather was one of those who died in the flu epidemic. On his death bed, he confessed to his relatives and grandchildren how strong his medicine was. He said he followed the advice of the first priest who came into that country, but regretted it. He could have used his power to help his people in many ways—caribou, for instance.

"All my life I have controlled barren-ground caribou," he said. "I once was a caribou, I can speak to caribou, I direct all caribou movements on the barren-land. After I was a caribou I became a person. This is the third time I've been incarnated as a person. After this I will die just as an ordinary person dies. I will not come back."

"I regret that I never pushed the caribou around the bush so that people would have good hunting. The reason I didn't was because I didn't want to show off. I didn't want people to bother me too much, so I kept all the caribou in one bunch and made them move all together. That way I figured they would protect themselves. I didn't like them to go into the bush too much because I thought they would suffer, maybe from too much snow, or a lot of hunters would overkill what they need, the wolves would get more. I figured they were better off on the barrens. In the fall they would go close to the treeline, in the spring they would go back to a special place where they could have their young. All the females would go in a circle and all the bulls would go around the outside. I have never been there myself but I went there with my medicine."

"In all this time I have controlled and protected the caribou by doing these things, but now our medicine is leaving us and I see nobody to replace me. Because of this I will predict what caribou movements will be like in the future."

My grandfather then said that within the lifetime of his children they would see the caribou come all around Bear Lake, and between there and the Mackenzie River, close to Good Hope and Norman and Colville, close to Wrigley, Simpson, Lac La Martre, Providence, all those places, and the caribou will also go across Slave Lake. This actually happened in 1945, somewhere around there. During one year great numbers of caribou came all around Bear Lake in October. All the hunters and trappers from Colville and Norman and Good Hope made real use of those caribou. Even around Fort Franklin they were still there in May. The ducks came, the caribou were running all over, people were shooting ducks and caribou at the same time. People had a lot of fun, there was lots of dry meat that summer.

And that's the last time that we remember caribou around here in great numbers. People still talk about it, they say, "Oh that's the time there were a lot of caribou, we haven't seen caribou in large numbers since then." People still get caribou but they have to go a long way for it.

Ever since then caribou movements have changed. They are erratic, sometimes they disappear as though they're decreasing. A lot of elders who've lived a long time have a little knowledge of caribou, they keep talking about how the caribou don't go where they're supposed to. With no one to control them, they go all over the country, they split up and go wherever they want to, and as a result they're on the decrease. Maybe because of people killing too much, or because of wolves, or because of some other reason.

All this my grandfather predicted before he died. That winter people say two caribou came and stood on his grave in Fort Norman.[21]

George Blondin, the teller of the previous story, marked a new era in the emergence of Dene voices with the publication of a whole volume of stories (Blondin 1990). Although Blondin is a member of the Sahtú Dene community, the stories of his people are to a large extent the stories of all Dene that just happen to be geographically positioned in the Sahtú region. Two are recounted here that have particular relevance to the my experiences in Lutsel K'e and with the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

The Man With Strong Muskox Medicine

A large group of Dene camped close to Sahtú early one spring long ago. As the weather started to get warm, the days got longer and the caribou started to migrate. The great herd moved away from its winter home in the forest toward the Barrenlands, where the animals then moved steadily north. This meant the people had to hunt farther and farther from camp.

Some of the hunters decided to get together to see if they could catch up with the main herd. The travelled two whole days, but they couldn't catch up with any of the caribou. On the third day, hungry and tired, they unhappily decided to go back. At mid-day they made a fire, and ate the last of their dry meat.

One of the hunters suddenly yelled at another: "You are always bragging about muskox medicine. What is it anyway? Here we are, tired and hungry. Why can't you do something for us?"

This story is very old, from the time when so many people had very strong medicine power. But it was hard for the hunters to believe in the muskox medicine this person said he had. In those days, most people had never seen a muskox, because these animals live far out in the Barrenlands.

The hunter stirred himself. "I will try, but don't speak to me during my medicine making," he said. "I will cut a small tree and try to make a circle with its trunk, joining the ends together. If I make the circle, set your snares on the shore. The muskoxen will come."

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[21] This story from *People and Caribou* (Hall 1989, 63-65) was told by George Blondin in Fort Franklin in 1983.

The medicine man cut down a small tree, and, singing away all day, tried to make a circle. He wanted the ends to join and stick together, just as if they were growing into each other. All the other hunters were watching with interest, to see if the circle would happen. And late in the day, the medicine man did make the circle.

The people rushed into the bush, made a fence and set snares the same way they had for the caribou. Meanwhile, the medicine man was playing with the circle he had made, throwing it out onto the lake and running after it.

At last, the people heard a thunder-like noise. A great herd of muskoxen was running toward them from the north.

Most of the muskoxen were caught in the snares. The people were very busy killing them, and some were already running to the fire to cook the meat.

The medicine man, still playing with the circle he had made, was in a trance. He could hear very far, and he also could get angry very easily. It was always the people's law that when a strong medicine man was in a trance, nobody was supposed to speak against him. But one loudmouthed individual was talking about the medicine man.

"Look at him," the hunter jeered. "He is so proud of himself, he's playing with that circle just like a kid." An Elder hushed him, warning that the medicine man might hear. But it was too late: the medicine man did hear him. He stopped playing with the circle and walked quickly to the one muskox left standing. He slapped the side of its face.

"Go back to the Barrenlands and don't return again," he shouted. "The people don't appreciate you here." He threw his circle to the north, and the muskox began to run after it.

All the muskoxen came alive again, and the frightened people ran off in all directions. Even the meat that was cut up came alive and ran away. In a few minutes there was nothing left.

The hunters were back where they had started. They were angry enough to kill the loudmouthed man, but the only thing they could do now was go home. And for the next hundred years, nobody saw a single muskox in that area.

After this long period, Dene came back to the place. They had among them another medicine man who knew about muskox. The people begged him to make the muskoxen come. He said he would try.

The medicine man cut a small tree trunk and tried to make a circle. After singing most of the day, he had just about made the circle. But he was not quite able to make the ends meet, and he could not push them any closer together. He told the people that he had thought he could make it, but the anger of the first man who made the medicine circle made it impossible for anyone else to do it.

"I can't make it," he said. "But even incomplete it has strong power to make the muskoxen come to the treeline, and some will come a short distance into the forest. If you hunt as far as the treeline, you'll see muskoxen."

To this day, the muskoxen will come as far as the treeline around Sahtú, on the north shore toward the great Barrenlands. That is how powerful these two medicine men were.[22]

A second story told by George Blondin adds context to the drumming that went on as part of a peyote ceremony I attended and to the drum that was made by consultant Pierre Catholique and painted with the eagle and the five suns of the Dene Nation by Antoine Mountain. It goes as follows:

The Drum

The old people tell us that the Creator gave Dene medicine powers to help them survive the hardships of living. It was part of our spiritual beliefs, just as it was part of the beliefs of all native peoples in Canada. The Elders say our people could not have survived without this medicine.

All people have the same kind of powers. Some had very strong medicine, and to them a drum song was given. the song came from the Creator and was given for a special purpose.

It's known that three or four of these special people lived in every Dene group. Medicine powers were distributed fairly among the people.

Although our people had songs for fun and dancing, drum songs were different. They were for praying, healing, seeing the future, for thanksgiving, and for preaching and teaching. Drum songs came two ways—through visions, or through a person's medicine. Life was hard in the old days, and people depended on the drum for spiritual strength.

A certain man saw visions at various times in his life. Once he saw a vision of four drums. There was no one else around at the time, just this man and four drums in the air. He could hear someone singing, and knew that the song was a gift for him, a message from the Creator. The words went something like this: *My people, the time on this earth is very short. Be good people, help each other. Work hard: that's part of the order of our Creator. Don't complain. Love one another. Listen to the drum song and live by it.*

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[22] Blondin (1990), 80-81.

> Many songs were passed from generation to generation. That's why we know how to sing drum songs even now, although a lot of us—especially the young—have forgotten where the songs came from and what their original purpose was. When the missionaries came, people started going to church and used new ways of praying, along with the traditional songs.
>
> In the early, early days, the Dene moved in small groups on the land, following game all year long. Every summer, the people gathered together. They would have a big drum dance, and the medicine people would sing prayer songs. They would ask the Creator for help during the coming year, and give thanks for all that had passed. They would walk slowly around in a big circle, singing and beating on the drum. The people followed in the circle, praying. As soon as they ended one song, they would start another. After prayers, the social part of the dance would begin and everyone would have a good time. That was the way they conducted a drum dance in the old days.[23]

Although there are no published stories told by Lutsel K'e Chipewyan in the manner of George Blondin, it is important to mention that work is progressing that incorporates the voices of the native people themselves. Astbury (1990) and Cruikshank (1981, 1990) are researching the Dene Nation as a whole, and Jacob (1985) is an example of work of this kind occurring in Lutsel K'e. Jacob's interests were primarily architectural: she used oral testimony to investigate the log construction techniques used by Chipewyan people to build the now-deserted structures on the east shore of Artillery Lake.

The new and emerging record of Dene experience is valuable, but much of it is based on past experience, on a way of life—an almost mythical existence, now—that is perhaps almost as foreign to young Chipewyans as it is to a researcher from the south. One must acknowledge the way in which this experience on the land, these stories, are an integral part of what it has meant, historically, to be Chipewyan, and what it will mean to be a resident of Lutsel K'e in the future. But to the current generation of young people growing up in communities like Lutsel

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[23] Blondin (1990), 58-59.

K'e, there is another body of literature that will perhaps be of even more value, and that is the literature arising out of the intensely personal and culturally significant politicization of land—land use and land claims.

A book that stands out as a poignant and timely political statement is *Dehcho: "Mom, we've been discovered,"* published by the Dene Cultural Institute (1989). Institute Executive Director, Joanne Barnaby, sets the tone of the book in its introduction.

> Motivated by the attention that was going to be paid to Alexander Mackenzie on his 200th year anniversary of travelling on our great river, the Dene Cultural Institute decided, within our limited resources, to try to put Mackenzie's role in history into perspective. This book is intended to portray the significance of our Great River, Dehcho, to the Dene. Through a variety of means, ... we hope that readers will get a new sense of importance of the river, and a greater appreciation of history from a Dene perspective.
>
> Ours is an oral tradition; as such we were unable to draw upon documented accounts of our own people. This oral tradition however, carries with it other means of insuring accuracy of history and historical perspective. We have been served well by our oral tradition and we continue to rely on our legends, stories and accounts of history, which, whether written or oral, carry with them the perspective of the authors. To this end, in addition to providing a Dene perspective in this publication, we have also selected excerpts from explorers' journals (including Mackenzie's) that portray their perspective of our land and our people. (7)

Four years after its publication, *Dehcho*, the book, now stands as a symbol for the almost impossible task of setting straight the record of Indian experience on the land. But it is a job that is ongoing, as Dene struggle to get their due in land claim negotiations with the Inuit and with the federal government. For example, Ted Blondin, Co-Chief Negotiator of the Dene/Metis Negotiations Secretariat, had prepared a brief background paper on the history of the Thelon Game Sanctuary (Andrews 1988), but the history is different from other documents of its kind (i.e.

Mackinnon 1983) in that it highlights Dene connections and perceptions of the place and its establishment.

We learn, for example, that when the standing Commission of Conservation of the Government of Canada[24] began the process of prohibiting the purchase of muskox robes, this not only—from the Dene point of view—killed the market for muskoxen hides, but also, according to Andrews, caused the Hudson's Bay Company to cancel plans to establish a trading post on the Thelon River, "at first timber" (Andrews 1988: 1). And in addition to historical facts concerning the Sanctuary, Andrews reports that in 1932 Bishop Breynat asked the NWT Council to secure transfer of the western portion of the Sanctuary to the Yellowknife preserve because it cut out a section of particularly good hunting and trapping ground. Breynat wanted this restored for exclusively Native use. The Council refused, says Andrews, but authorized the RCMP to issue Chipewyan permits to cross the western end of the Sanctuary. Andrews further reports that in 1935 the Chipewyan complained to government officials that they resented the loss of the area and considered that muskoxen had become their enemy because of the potential trouble involved in hunting them within the Sanctuary. This trouble came to a head in 1938/39 when Chipewyan hunting of muskox was reported by the Snowdrift trader, Eddie Jones. RCMP investigated in 1938, but found no evidence; however, in 1939, Andrews reports that Corporal Thompson of the RCMP arrested three Chipewyans for shooting a muskox in the Sanctuary, three men who were eventually detained for a month in Reliance after being tried in Resolution.[25] And finally, Andrews reports that in 1980, responding to a request by two Inuit hunters from the Sand Hills area, the two Keewatin members of the territorial legislature sponsored a resolution to open the Sanctuary for hunting and trapping for all general hunting licence holders. The resolution was passed, but before Chipewyans and others could regain their right to hunt in the area of the Thelon, the then-minister of Renewable Resources, Richard Nerysoo, reminded the assembly that any changes in the conservation status of the Sanctuary were subject to approval by federal order-in-council. The emphasis and content of this account and the other findings of Andrews, as presented to the Dene/Metis Negotiations Secretariat, are unique relative to other accounts of the same period, and fall into a growing category of land impressions contained in legal/political documents that are now an established part of the recorded voice of Dene people (i.e. Gunther 1990; Dene-Metis Negotiations Secretariat 1990; Liske & Abel 1990; Siddon 1991; and Parker 1991).

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[24] Established in 1909 as part of the Department of the Interior.

All of the above material is important background and context to this study, but it is really of little specific use in understanding detailed Chipewyan conceptions of land in general or of the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular. One document, however, breaks that trend, and it is a document that has an unlikely history.

When members of the Dene-Metis Mapping Project came to Lutsel K'e in the 1980s, they arrived with 1:250,000 topographic maps which elders used to show where they'd trapped and lived and travelled over the years. These maps remain. Unfortunately, what was said and by whom was either never recorded, or the tapes and/or notes were lost. The result was that when it came time to defend a claim on territory traditionally used by Chipewyan people on the east end of Great Slave Lake, the people of Lutsel K'e were left without tangible evidence. Their land use map was impressive—the reticule of trails looked like a map of Europe—but there was no documentation to back it up. To remedy this situation, Trevor Teed, a Metis from Yellowknife, was contracted in December 1989 and January 1990 (two trips) to re-gather this documentation. Teed's *Preliminary Report on Dene/Metis Land Use of Area East Great Slave Lake* (Teed 1990) is a fascinating document that stands, as close as any other effort and in spite of being written by a Metis, as the Chipewyan history of contact with Thelon lands.

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[25] This was the same year, 1939, that Corporal Thompson and Special Constable Archie Larocque patrolled to Warden's Grove on the Thelon looking for poachers and seeking the Inuk, Teleruk, wanted in connection with the murder of two white trappers as described to me by Noel Drybone and Pierre Catholique.

"From Great Bear Lake to beyond the Thelon River, the Dene/Metis ... have always utilized the Barren Lands. Chipewyan and Dogrib elders describe the Thelon River as [the place] 'where God began when the world was created,'"[26] says Teed. He continues:

> The people of Snowdrift have also said that years ago the white explorers and adventurers who frequented the Thelon River area often failed to see the Dene who were there "making a living from the land." These explorers would return south and draft reports stating the Thelon was a "no man's land" and the natives did not use this area. Until recently, the Dene/Metis were not aware that they apparently did not use these lands (Teed 1990: 1).

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[26] This conception of the Thelon blends nicely with Hearne's characterization of the place as "little commonwealth," after his encounter with Northern Indians, Tyrrell's notion of Thelon as "Garden of Eden," (after Hearne) and novelist Thomas York's contention that the Chipewyan word for the barrenlands is "Heegla," meaning "God's body" (York 1976: 2).

Teed offers all manner of proof of Chipewyan use of the Thelon area, including a section on place names. "Thelon" he says is a Chipewyan word meaning "last wood river on the Barrens." Many of the lakes in the Thelon area are Chipewyan or derivatives of early Chipewyan names. "Dubawnt" he offers as a Chipewyan word that means either "many tepee smoke flaps", or "open leads in the ice."[27] He goes on:

> The residents of Snowdrift have provided maps which indicate their land use within living memory. ... There were problems in terms of identifying land use within the Thelon Game Sanctuary after its establishment. The people were hesitant to admit that they had used this area. In the past residents of Snowdrift were imprisoned for utilizing this area that the Chipewyan had occupied for longer than 2000 years (Teed 1990: 4).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Teed's document is the relationship with land that it implies through references to the original land use maps. In the lands that go beyond the Thelon Game Sanctuary to the north and to the east, his report details eleven "areas of cultural importance," including the Parry Falls, Rat Lodge, various caribou crossing places and the place on Artillery Lake where the "Beaver Legend"[28] began. Also detailed are 12 marked grave sites, 166 camping places where there are tent frames or cabins, and ten Chipewyan place names offered as proof of Lutsel K'e people's use of the Thelon lands over the years. Teed report is based almost entirely on oral history interviews with Lutsel K'e residents.

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[27] Luste (1985) contends that when Oblate Father Alphonse Gasté travelled north from his Reindeer Lake mission into the barrenlands with Chipewyan Indians he reached "Tuantue" Lake, which Luste says is now known as Dubawnt Lake. This accounts would have "Tuantue" being a Chipewyan word meaning "the lake with water on the edges, because in summer the centre ice did not melt." (42)

[28] This I suspect to be the Lutsel K'e version of Yamoria.

In summary, what is significant about these sources is that, in addition to intrinsic value, the written texts provide important background and context, and in some cases historical detail or counterpoint to other views of the place, that will assist comprehension of the spoken texts from Lutsel K'e.

Experiential Texts from Lutsel K'e

Preliminary investigation into approaching the people of Lutsel K'e about the prospect of doing this research made it clear that I would have to tread very carefully. On the subject of James VanStone, an anthropologist who had been in the community in the early 1960s, a reporter in the mid-1980s quoted one resident as saying if Mr. VanStone were to be foolish enough to come back to Lutsel K'e he would be "trussed up, tarred and feathered" (Steed 1986: A10). And according to the same article, a student from McGill University interested in Chipewyan attitudes toward the proposed East Arm-Artillery Lake National Park had been "forced to leave" the community after only four days. Consultations with people in Yellowknife at the Dene Nation, Dene Cultural Institute, and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre confirmed the fact that the residents and leadership in Lutsel K'e were fed up with southern researchers.

Chief Felix Lockhart captured that sentiment in his opening remarks to me at a first meeting in Lutsel K'e. He said, "We're not real fussy on researchers because they take away and never give anything back." After a long and convoluted series of steps in actually getting to Lutsel K'e to speak with Chief Lockhart and members of the Lutsel K'e Band Council, his comment somehow cleared the air and gave us a place to begin.

On advice from officials in the Dene Nation office and the Dene Cultural Institute in Yellowknife, contact with the Lutsel K'e Band began with a letter, sent October 24th, asking permission to visit the community to speak to the chief and council about the possibility researching the Thelon Game Sanctuary. A follow-up call to the band office on the 11th of November revealed no record of the letter. A second copy of the original letter was sent with covering letter to the band administrator by fax the following day. A follow-up call to the band administrator on the 15th of November confirmed receipt of the faxed letters and let me know that the chief would be busy during the period of my proposed visit later in the month. It would be unwise, the administrator told me, to turn up in the community without invitation on the chance of catching Chief Lockhart for a 15-minute meeting during a free moment. Having booked my ticket to Yellowknife and Lutsel K'e by this time, I cancelled the portion from Yellowknife to Lutsel K'e, hoping that from Yellowknife I might have more luck in arranging a meeting with the chief and/or members of the band council.

I went to Yellowknife for a week in late November 1990, and was fortunate enough finally to speak with Chief Lockhart on the phone. "We should talk," he said, after I'd explained the reason for my visit. In the early afternoon that day I took the 45-minute flight from Yellowknife to Lutsel K'e and found my way to the Sezo T'iné administrative building. Just before six P.M., the Chief motioned from the door of his office for me to enter, where I joined a gathering that included Chief Felix Lockhart, councillors Antoine Michel and George Marlowe and Band Administrator Mary-Rose Catholique. Chief Lockhart picked up my original letter and said, "Hmm, October 23rd ... and I only saw it now." After some conversation in Chipewyan, Chief Lockhart asked me what it was that I was trying to do. After a ten minute explanation of the research that featured my perception of what was in the work for the band,[29] they said that yes, it would be fine if I came back and gave it a go. Chief Lockhart said that there was a man in the community, his good friend J.C. Catholique, a trained journalist, who might be interested in the work. With that the meeting broke up. Chief Lockhart gave me a quick tour of the community in the darkness and dropped me off at the "hotel" (a six-bed transient house—"$100/night, bring your own food") with a promise to take me to meet J.C. Catholique in the morning.

That we did. Chief Lockhart took me to J.C.'s house the following morning and we spoke about the possibilities for collaboration between the work he'd been doing through interviewing elders and the work I was proposing to do in speaking to elders about land in general and the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular. Just before leaving, councillor Antoine Michel found me and asked about funding and whether there would be a possibility of finding money to help finance the next year's annual snowmachine trip to the Thelon area. I assured him that I would try my best to find funds. I left Lutsel K'e later that day feeling quite buoyant about a return visit.

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[29] I explained that collaboration was a founding principle of the work and that in the project for the band was a guarantee of tapes and bound transcripts and copies of any written material being left with the band *and* that I was willing to work with members of the band to put some of the stories from elders into some kind of curriculum supplement for the school. This part of the project, I explained, could involve training young people in the community to do oral history work and/or to help in the production of a publication. I also pointed out that documentation of land use that would occur as part this project would have potential benefit for the band in continuing land claim negotiations. And suggestions were solicited from the band concerning other ways that the research could contribute to the community.

My impression of Lutsel K'e after this visit was that the cautiousness and hesitance in getting involved with any researcher was a direct reflection of previous bad experience with researchers, but also a reflection of the high regard held by Chipewyan people for the sanctity of land. I was asking, it seemed, to come to the community and to explore something with band members that was very important—important enough for them to be very sure that my intention was honourable, and worthy of support. Two elements of the flow of events in my first visit to Lutsel K'e stand out. The first is the moment at which, in J.C. Catholique's house, Chief Lockhart—by this time he had established that I should call him Felix—Felix looked at me over a pot of tea and bowl of "drymeat" (strips of dried caribou meat) and said, "Who are you anyway? We need to know. Do you have references?" That was the first indication that he was starting to take my proposal seriously. The second element that stands out in setting the context in my mind for the return visit and for the importance of land to the Chipewyan people of Lutsel K'e was a poster on the wall in the Sezo T'iné administrative building, outside the the council chambers that read as follows:

Dene Statement of Rights

We the Dene of the Northwest Territories insist on the right to be regarded by ourselves and the world as a Nation. Our struggle is for recognition of the Dene Nation by the Government and people of Canada and the peoples and governments of the world. As once Europe was the exclusive homeland of the European peoples, Africa the exclusive homeland of the African peoples; the New World, North and South America, was the exclusive homeland of Aboriginal peoples of the New World, the Amerindian and the Inuit. The New World like other parts of the world has suffered the experience of colonialism and imperialism. Other peoples who have occupied the land—often with force—and foreign governments have imposed themselves on our people. Ancient civilizations and ways of life have been destroyed. Colonialism and imperialism is now dead or dying. Recent years have witnessed the birth of new nations or rebirth of old nations out of the ashes of colonialism. As Europe is the place where you will find European Countries with European governments for European peoples, now also will you find in Africa and Asia the existence of African

> and Asian governments for the African and Asian Peoples. The African and Asian peoples—the peoples of the third world—have fought for and won the right to self-determination, the right to recognition as distinct peoples and the recognition of themselves as nations. But in the New World the native peoples have not fared so well. Even in the countries in South America where the Native Peoples are the vast majority of the population, there is not one country which has an Amerindian government for the Amerindian people. Nowhere in the New World have the Native peoples won the right to self-determination and the right to recognition by the world as distinct people and as Nations. While the Native people of Canada are a minority in their homeland, the Native people of the NWT, the Dene and the Inuit, are a majority of the population of the NWT. The Dene find themselves part of a country. That country is Canada. But the Government of Canada is not the Government of the Dene. These governments were not the choice of the Dene, they were imposed on the Dene. What the Dene are struggling for is the recognition of the Dene Nation by the governments and peoples of the world. And while these are realities we are forced to submit to, such as the existence of a country called Canada, we insist on the right to self-determination as a distinct people and the recognition of the Dene Nation. We the Dene are part of the Fourth World. And as peoples and Nations of the world have come to recognize the existence and rights of those peoples who make up the Third World, the day must come and will come when the nations of the Fourth World, will come to be recognized and respected. The challenge to the Dene and the world is to find the way for recognition of the Dene Nation. Our plea to the world is to help us in our struggle to find a place in the world community where we can exercise our right to self-determination as a distinct people and as a nation. What we seek then is independence and self- determination within the country of Canada. This is what we mean when we call for a just land settlement for the Dene Nation.

But more than a statement about land and the importance of land, this articulation of Dene rights, from a Dene perspective, embodied and brought to the surface some of the anger and resistance to colonialism and imperialism that I had felt in the community. One gets the sense that since "contact" the Dene have never been given the respect as a nation that they need. Some of that rage was written into the Dene Statement, and it was upon initially reading the document that I began to appreciate, for the first time, how this kind of recognition is the first building block of a new relationship between Canada and the Dene Nation.

The Declaration resonated through my head as I checked in with contacts in Yellowknife at various places including the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage

Centre. There, on a display wall,I encountered a familiar quote from Dene elder Richard Nerysoo that helped consolidate in my mind the fact that for the Dene, the people of Lutsel K'e included, *land* as such can never be separated from the people, the way they've lived in the past, and the way they live even today. Land is an integrated and existential fact of Dene life. Nerysoo's words, as quoted in the Berger Report and reiterated on the walls of the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, added impact to my short but intense encounter in Lutsel K'e. He said:

> It is very clear to me that it is an important and special thing to be an Indian. Being an Indian means being able to understand and live with this world in a very special way. It means living with the land, with the animals, with the birds and fish, as though they were your sisters and brothers. It means saying the land is an old friend and an old friend your father knew, your grandfather knew, indeed your people have always known. ... We see our land as much, much more than the white man see it. To the Indian people our land is really our life. Without our land we ... could no longer exist as people.[30]

Verbal approval from Chief Lockhart enabled the completion of licencing procedures with the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories, and I was able to leave home again for Lutsel K'e on the 25th of March, 1991, arriving in the community on the 27th of March. By then, there had been an election in the community. Felix Lockhart had been replaced by former councillor Antoine Michel as chief and there was a new council. As I sat with Chief Michel and Metis land use mapper Trevor Teed in Michel's house that evening, eating fresh boiled lake trout and drinking tea, I came slowly to the realization that approval in November did not necessarily mean approval to proceed in March. Chief Michel was cordial but stated that I was not proceed with anything until the new council examined and approved the research. This stipulation effectively shelved *my* schedule for the research and invoked a sequence and pace of events set by Chief Michel and the people of Lutsel K'e.

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[30] Nerysoo, 1977, as quoted in T. Berger (1977), Volume I, 94.

Tentative approval to proceed with interviews did not come until the 8th of April. This meant that for 13 days the research strategy was patience. I was frustrated at this interruption of my research schedule, but in retrospect, there was great wisdom and potent instructional power in Chief Michel forcing me to wait. I learned much in those 13 days: not least of the lessons was that the people of Lutsel K'e take land matters with absolute reverence and attention and in a way that forces them to be *sure* that a researcher from the south is legitimate and has plans *that will genuinely benefit* the community.

It was the end of winter and a glorious time to be in the north. Days were getting longer and warmer. Nights were capped with pincushion skies and shimmering northern lights. I walked for miles, during the days and nights, along packed trails leading away from the community, and fished for lake trout at the place they called "The Gap." I learned that Lutsel K'e means "place of little fish." I lay in the snow on the magnificent hill behind the community or on the ice of Great Slave Lake to ponder the place and the people. I attended the Lutsel K'e Spring Carnival, pulled Nevada tickets, and, during the carnival fishing derby, learned that WD-40 penetrating oil sprayed on lures and minnows is failsafe bait for fickle winter lake trout. From the outside, I watched as the community received family and visitors from Saskatchewan and farther afield to help bury former chief Joe Lockhart who, at age 69, had died of cancer in an Edmonton hospital. And at Chief Michel's suggestion I sat in the council chambers with land use mapper Trevor Teed as he valiantly worked against a short deadline to assemble a cogent statement of Chipewyan land use patterns in the Thelon Game Sanctuary area for former NWT commissioner John Parker.[31] Even with permission to do nothing other than be there with Trevor Teed, the time in his presence was important.

The central lingering element from the encounter, besides an absolute horror story about going through the ice on his skidoo the previous fall (see details in Teed's portion of *Spoken Texts* in the next section of this work), was *the* land use map for the whole area used by the Chipewyan people of Lutsel K'e. One-to-quarter-million-scale topographic maps laminated together in a single great sheet were spread out across the council table showing all the trails or "roads" used by people in the community in living memory.

The effect of this information on the map was *impressive*! Main thoroughfares (used winter and/or summer) were marked with thick black lines; individual traplines were marked with thin black lines; dozens and dozens of cabins were marked with green dots; and camping sites and places of special significance were marked with purple dots. Also marked on the map were areas, circled in green, where trees (firewood) could be found, denning areas for grizzly bears and places of historical interest. From Great Slave Lake to the Dubawnt River and from Contwoyto Lake to the provincial border it appeared from the map that one could not go more than 10 km in *any* direction without crossing a Dene path of some kind. The density of roads and trails on this map made it look more like a map of central Europe than the untrammelled wilderness I had come to associate with the barrenlands.

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[31] Parker was appointed by Thomas Siddon, federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to suggest a line of division between Inuit and Dene/Metis land claims in the Northwest Territories. As it turned out, this land had to bisect the Thelon Game Sanctuary, which meant both groups had to establish current and historic use of the area. See Parker (1991) and Dene/Metis Negotation Secretariat (1990) for details.

Teed had been with the elders on previous visits to the community when they had marked on all of these routes and roads. The problem he was facing in the spring of 1991 was that there was only very scanty documentation of who drew the lines and what they said about how and when the land was used. Teed had come back to town to try to reconnect with some of his earlier informants to get some of their comments about land use, especially about land in the Thelon area, for former commissioner Parker. While he was there, only a couple of people came by to speak about the map. Teed was forced to draft a report which he faxed to Dene Nation National Chief Bill Erasmus. It said there was no way he could get what was required in terms of land use documentation about the area of overlap with the Inuit before the deadline. Because he was from outside the community, I asked Teed if he would speak to me about his knowledge of the Thelon Game Sanctuary (thinking this was outside the purview of the Lutsel K'e council). He agreed, and became the first consultant on tape in Lutsel K'e. Before leaving town, Trevor expressed a need to take with him the information on the large land use maps, but that he doubted Chief Michel and the council would allow him to remove them from the community. I'd brought a couple of extra 1:4,000,000-scale maps of the NWT and offered to transcribe at least the major roads from the big map to the smaller map for him to take with him and add to his submission to former commissioner Parker. He agreed, and I spent the better part of a morning engrossed in the task of following the routes lake by lake, stream by stream, ridge by esker—the routes that have been used for centuries by the Chipewyan to access the Thelon—and marking them on the smaller scale map. Somehow by good luck, good fortune, serendipity, or through the mysterious insight of Chief Michel, I had found myself scribing the document that would be used by the federal minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to divide the NWT! But I was in no position to do anything other than try to appreciate and remember what I was seeing. Scribing a map for the purposes of the research would contravene the chief's prohibition of activity until council approval. For the first of several times in the community I felt close to something of great relevance to my investigation but without anything other than my eyes, ears and memory to carry it into the future.

Life in the community during these long days prior to council approval to proceed was punctuated by short exchanges with many people in the community. Occasionally people on the street would ask who I was and what I was doing in town. Sometimes children would drop by the hotel. And as time went by, it became impossible to walk anywhere because someone would always roar up beside me on a snowmachine and offer a lift.

Slowly I became familiar with the sights and sounds of the place and of the community pulse as people went about their business. Planes from Yellowknife came and went most weekdays, and during the evenings and weekends there would be a steady stream of snowmachines with toboggans in tow leaving the community, taking hunters to the caribou.

Other transients—mostly tradesmen—came and went from the hotel. One day a pair of polar adventurer Will Steiger's dog trainers arrived, by dog team, from Minnesota *en route* to Yellowknife, and my interest in their magnificent adventure was eclipsed only by the way in which the people of Lutsel

K'e—especially the children—were curious about their dogs and sleds.[32] A technician from CBC in Yellowknife came by one day and modified the local receiving system and enabled the small television in the hotel to pick up CBC North. One evening I came in and turned on the television, watched it for a while, and then wrote this entry in my journal:

> Funny place Canada—I come in, turn on the little television and find three people talking away in Inuktitut about the James Bay Power Project. Shortly thereafter Adrienne Clarkson comes and says that the following program was interrupted by a news bulletin (perhaps about the Oka crisis?) when it was first aired. Because Quebec and Ontario didn't see the program, she's running it again. It's about Cree playwright Thompson Highway. Clarkson flies with him three hours back from Winnipeg to his home at Brochet, near Reindeer Lake. She asks what it was like to go to Winnipeg to attend high school. He replies, "Imagine a beaver trying to cross Yonge Street." I feel a bit like that here. But then Highway goes on to say that the Roman Catholic church is the "ultimate source of psychological and cultural disorder in the Indian community." He says that in a metaphorical way, "the Roman Catholic church has raped a culture and its religion." He went on to say that the irony of it is that the younger generation is trying to re- kindle its old religion but to do that it needs to go against the wishes of the elders who still subscribe to Catholicism. So here I sit ... in Lutsel K'e ... chewing on a Pilot biscuit.[33]

In the absence of other clues or feelings to go on, it was difficult to trust the *new* schedule for the research. Except for the belief that the Chipewyan story would eventually reveal itself and the determination to be patient until such time as it did, there was very little to celebrate in these first two weeks in Lutsel K'e. The wisdom of Chief Michel's plan for the work began emerge after Easter and as March gave way to April.

April Fool's Day:

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[32] It is worth noting that these two men had abandoned a route picked out on standard maps of the area through which they travelled, in favour of talking to Indians along the way who told them of the "roads" to take to the next place. These trails are not marked on *any* commercially available map, but turned out to be the route of choice all the way from Lake Superior, through Manitoba, Saskatchewan and north to Lutsel K'e.

[33] Journal Vol. 2, 155-156.

Interesting circumstances these. I've just returned from a morning of fishing with Antoine (Chief Michel) and a few of the men from town at The Gap. I was able to salvage about 25m of line that was all knotted up and tied around a birch stick. I sat on Antoine's snowmachine while he fished and untangled the line. While doing that I asked if he would be interested in talking about my project so he could understand it and help me explain it to the council. "Yes." We chatted a little bit how important that process of approval is. "Nothing behind anybody's back. What we do is based on honesty and trust. If I do something they don't like, they can throw me out," he said. At one point in the conversation, after I'd asked him how he was liking being chief and he said it was a lot of work, he said, "I have to see this landclaim through." The boundary dispute or the whole land claim I asked. "The whole thing." Big job. Somewhere in the conversation about the approval process he said, "You worked for the Inuits some time ago?" I said that I had spent time in Baker lake as basecamp for an archaeological expedition and that I had also spent time in the Baffin Region. "I'm not a spy," I said. He laughed. "The council needs to be sure about what it's doing always," he said. This waiting period, it occurred to me, may be more of a testing period than it might at first appear.

Actually, being in this place under these circumstances is a good test of character. Here, with the simple act of arriving, I am divested of many of the types of knowledge held by other people that—at home—constitute who I am. At home, and elsewhere in the southern world, there is JR the spouse; JR the father; JR the neighbour; JR the professor; JR the author; JR the canoehead; JR the graduate student; JR the friend; JR the public speaker; JR the son. Knowledge of these various roles and personas elicits a certain type of response from people which may or may not reinforce the image in their head and mine. But here, I am none of those things, except in my own head (and I must admit that it is difficult to hang onto any kind of persona in your head and still maintain the ability to observe and interact with the world around) and that fact creates fertile ground for crisis in confidence in who the hell I am anyway.

Here, in Lutsel K'e, I am a white guy from out of town—a stranger staying a the hotel. At the very worst I am a government or Inuit spy, sent to infiltrate the Dene/Metis land claim process. Or, I am an anthropologist like James VanStone, come to write disparagingly about sex and kinship. Or, I am a naive student like Jennifer Adams here to take without giving anything back. Or, I am a rich tourist to be fleeced and released to the south. At best I am who I appear to be, who I say I am and person from whom the community could stand to gain. Meanwhile I wait—dying to get on with what I came here to do—a project to which the chief and band council gave the nod last November. I can't help thinking (this may be just paranoia brought on by the struggle to be patient) that these Chipewyan people have been burned so many times by Whites (Gov't, church etc.) that they get some kind of sweet satisfaction when somebody like me comes along. I *hope* Antoine isn't toying with me and my willingness to play by their rules and my naive desire to understand. One can certainly imagine that just by *showing up* in town, a blonde-haired, blue-eyed southerner can't help but focus attentions, frustrations and anger of townsfolk. "Hey whiteman!" I've heard kids call from behind buildings as I've walked through the village at night.[34]

As things unfolded, the events and insights of April 1st turned out to be a portent of what was to happen a week later. Sunday April 7th I was fishing again with Chief Michel (We were both entrants in the Lutsel K'e Spring Carnival fishing derby: he'd had bait fish flown in specially from Yellowknife; we were fishing side by side; he was catching fish, I wasn't) when he mentioned casually that he was calling a council meeting for the next day and that this might be a good time for me to come and explain what it was that I wanted to do in my research. This changed me and the pace of the research considerably. In the next three weeks, I had been given the services of an interpreter and allowed to interview and photograph the majority of elders in the town; attended an all-night sacred ceremony; bought a snowmachine;[35] participated in two day-long hunting sorties and gone on an extended journey from Lutsel K'e onto the barrenlands to a point inside the original boundary of the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

Highlights of these tumultuous final weeks in Lutsel K'e need only be touched here to give the reader a sense of the power and relevance of what went on.

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[34] Journal, Vol. 2, 193- 196.

[35] Travelling back and forth to The Gap for fishing had shown me clearly that there was no way I could possibly go as a passenger with someone all the way from Lutsel K'e to the Thelon River, should a spring trip happen. So when a handbill went up in the community hall during the carnival advertising a used Yamaha SRV 540 for sale, I jumped. It looked like there was no way I was going to be able to rent one and, provided the machine still worked when I was finished with it, it looked like it was a workable vehicle for resale. Fortunately, but only after signing travellers cheques to buy the machine, the owner saw his way clear to lease me the same machine, with an agreement to pay him a lump sum approaching the purchase price if damaged during my use.

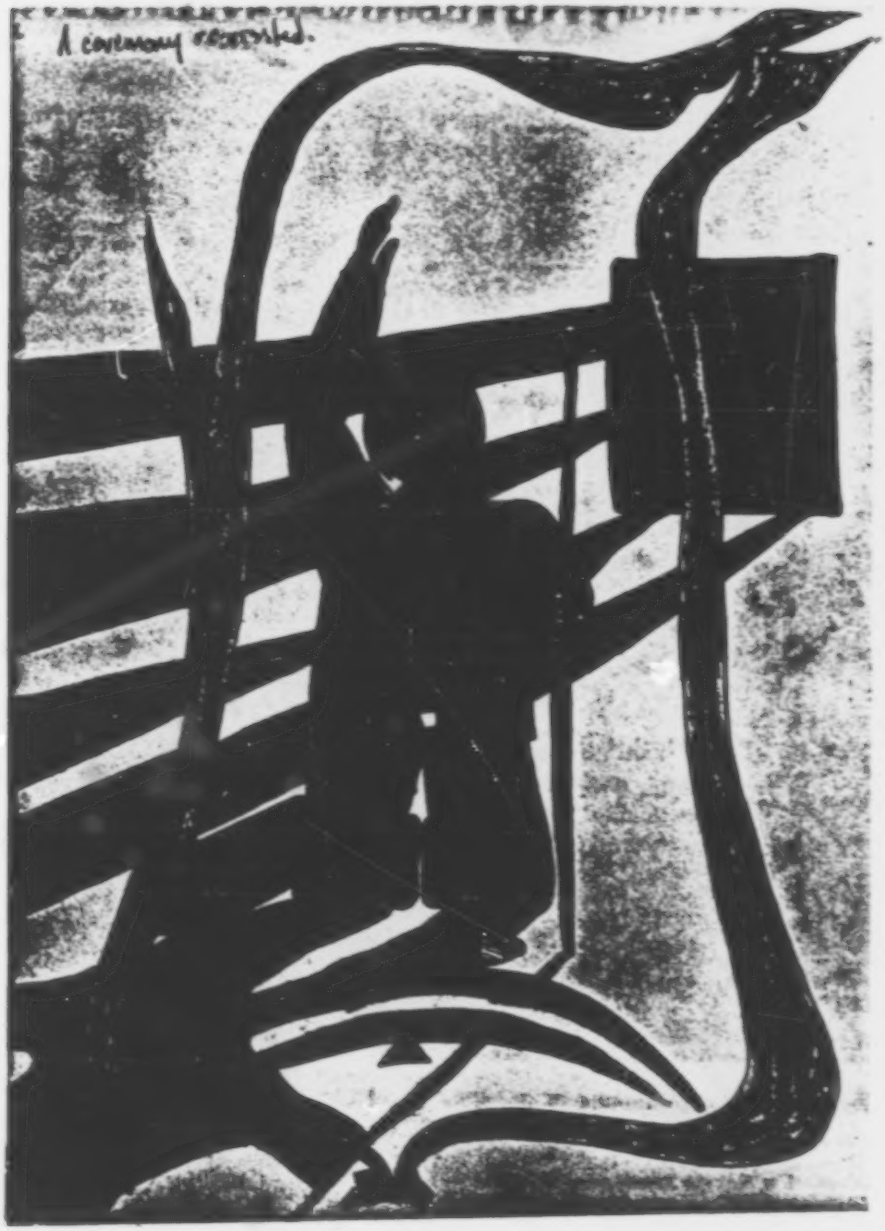
A ceremony revisited.

Figure 3. **The Road Man:** Land symbols and imagery figure prominently in a visual re-visiting of an all-night sacred ceremony in which the Road Man presides over efforts to help a local man come to terms with his personal struggle with alcohol.

The council met twice over a five day period in early April and gave the go-ahead for the research to proceed. But even in the second meeting, the moment before Chief Michel said "Your project looks good. Go ahead, bring your information back to us before you release it" (Band Council Minutes for 12 April 1991, 1), I could sense that there was still some hesitation and mistrust in the ranks. My interpreter, Archie Catholique, explained, "There still exists a mistrust amongst the people against outsiders. This is because the Federal Government never kept it promises to our people." But this meeting did allow the research to proceed and as such released an entry key to speak with elders in town, to travel and hunt with people like Eddy Catholique and Noel Drybone, and to participate in community events.

Perhaps the most potent of all events I attended was one that began at midnight one night. Archie phoned to say that I should get dressed, find a pillow and wait for him to pick me up. He roared up several minutes later on his snowmachine and from there we went to a log home that had been converted into a place for sacred ceremonies. The sponsor of this gathering was a man who was trying to break cycles of alcoholism and violence in his life. The event's organizer—or Road Man—was J.C. Catholique. His medicine was peyote. From midnight until two o'clock the following afternoon the group continued with drumming, and smoking and speaking and silent meditation around a fire and crescent moon constructed in a earthen altar in the middle of the one large room in the building. The peyote medicine, the roadman explained, was procured through connections with the Navajo in the Southwestern United States. He told me afterwards that there were local medicinal herbs and plants but it had been so long since anyone had conducted a ceremony like this one that no one remembered what they were.

The key learning from this event, derived from visual processing of what happened, had to do with the steadfastness and strength of the young roadman, J.C. Catholique, who, in directing his people back to the teachings of the Creator and to the power of the land and its symbols, showed me depth in connection to land and depth of belief in the possibilities of life attached to the land that I saw nowhere else in Lutsel K'e.

My time in Lutsel K'e was *grounded* in and on the land was through a series of outings with elder Noel Drybone. He spoke very little English and most of the time I was with Noel on the land we were without a translator, but nevertheless, during day-long hunting trips south and west of the community and on a multi-day journey into the barrenlands with Noel, there was much to be learned from what he did and how he did it about his connections to the land. The most moving of these lessons came on a bitterly cold day on the south end of Artillery Lake. We had spent the night at his cabin at Fort Reliance, moved north again and had just lunched on fresh caribou organ meat at an outpost cabin of his at the "T" (the junction between Artillery Lake and the Lockhart River), when he stopped his snowmachine and dug a can of chewing tobacco out of his pocket. As he threw shreds of tobacco on the snow, he told me to get some matches. When the matches were produced, he motioned to throw them on the snow. "You must Pay the land," he said. This act crystallized for me all of the talk about respect for the land. "Paying the land" was a way of giving back to the Creator for the gifts of life and lifestyle and food that came from the land.

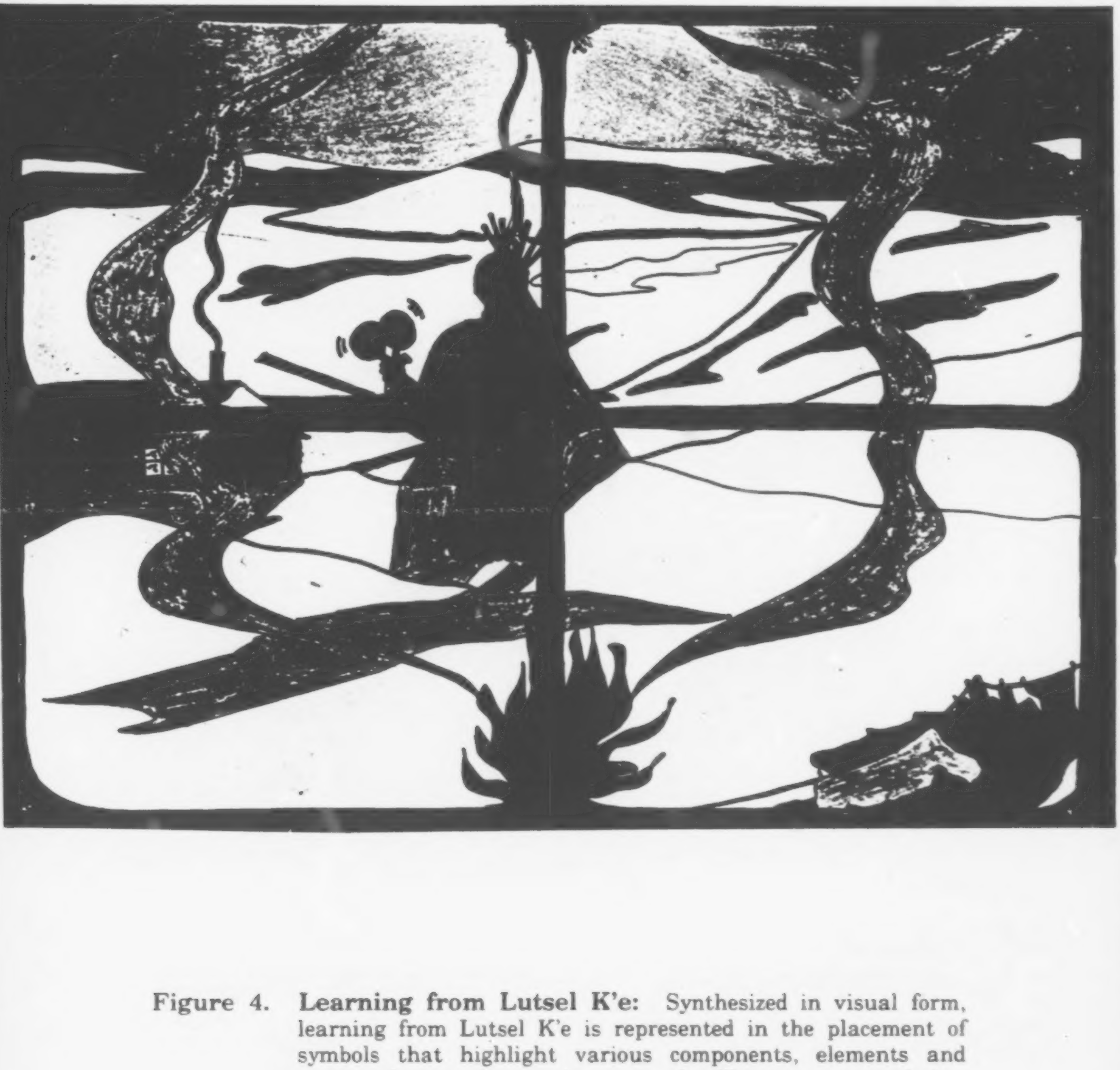

Figure 4. Learning from Lutsel K'e: Synthesized in visual form, learning from Lutsel K'e is represented in the placement of symbols that highlight various components, elements and stages of research experiences in the Chipewyan community. Land is shown as connection between Chipewyan people and understanding.

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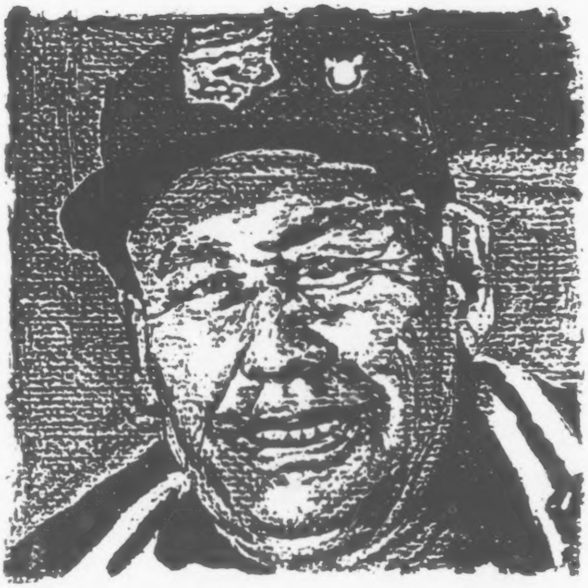
Synthesizing the lessons of experience in Lutsel K'e—such as those learned with Noel Drybone—is a difficult enterprise at the best of times. Sifting and sorting the heady amalgam of sights, sounds, feelings, people and experiences is a process that was aided greatly in the field stages of this research by attempting to capture visually the lessons of the Lutsel K'e experience. Figure 4 on page 77 illustrates the result of this effort and merits explanation. The central figure in the piece is J.C. Catholique, the Road Man, through whom I came to see all of my experience in Lutsel K'e. He was a wise and patient teacher and a crucial, if silent, supporter of the work. In the end, it was J.C. who provided the window which allowed me to frame and focus all of the feelings, insights and impressions that came at one time or another in Lutsel K'e. The fire symbolizes the sun and its centrality in matters of the earth. The smoke is the smoke of sacred herbs, such as cedar, sage and tobacco, that were burned during the peyote ceremony. The smoke takes earthly wishes skyward to the creator. The smoke, in this image, is also a symbol which, in my mind, includes everything associated with respect and "paying the land" that came from my time with Noel Drybone. The smoke could be a closed circle that has at its top the sun, the bright light, the symbol of the creator, the great spirit, God; but the circle of smoke is not closed, it is a broken connection that might only be completed by smoke that comes from attachment to and practice of the old ways (symbolized by the teepee). The way that leads from the current life in Lutsel K'e (the cabin) to the land is the red road, the right road, that was a pre-eminent image in the peyote ceremony. And the land—the land is an embodiment of the creator on earth; it is the connection between people and the creator. The creator, the bright light, *is* understanding—the land, therefore, links people with understanding. Without land, there can be no connection for Chipewyan people to the creator, to understanding.

Voices from Lutsel K'e

Joe Boucher



Chipewyan Interpreter Archie Catholique and I met up with 80-year-old elder Joe Boucher (bush-eh) in a little room in the Band Office. He seemed very glad to be asked to contribute to the research. He told us he was born at Narrow Point on the Slave River (near Fort Smith) around 1911, and that when he was young he lived around Fort Smith and Fort Resolution. In a couple of sequential moves, he went to Rocher River, to Snowdrift and eventually trapped in the vicinity of Artillery Lake. On several occasions, he told us, he struck out east to trap white fox in the vicinity of Hanbury River and eventually the Thelon River. He spoke of travelling east to Big Sand and coming to a point overlooking the Thelon River valley where he was always awed by the great beauty of the sight before his eyes. He did quite a bit of travelling in the Thelon River area, but always stayed to the west side of the river. For Joe, the Thelon sounded like a sort of border or barrier to the range of the territory he used. He spoke of a number of things in response to Archie's explanations of the central questions in my research, including mentioning running into a man who he thought was John Hornby in Rocher River when he was living there.

What impressed me most about Joe Boucher was the knowledge he had gained through trapping on the Barrens. He seemed to know where all of the little pockets of trees were between Lutsel K'e and the Thelon River, and spoke of carrying "sticks" to fuel his 10-gallon drum stove and heat his tent for the two nights on the barrens that separated the last repository of wood and the Thelon oasis. It became clear in our conversation that the act of trapping makes a man pay attention to the land in very special ways; the level of detail in his articulation of what individual places looked like often was different depending on the season and direction of approach. And also it was apparent from Boucher's comments that being on the barrens trapping white fox necessarily meant spending a goodly amount of time storm-stayed and that it was at this time that trappers would talk and spin tales of their predecessors and contemporaries. The two examples he gave me—one about the old trapper who shot himself and one about the Inuk murderer—sounded very much like the kind of thing one might imagine as the substance of conversation of storm-stayed men in a tent on the barrenlands.

Joe Boucher had profound respect for the land, especially for its power to give and to take life. When he spoke about putting charcoal rings around the legs of his dogs "on the other side" (of the Thelon River) to protect them from unknown and unseen harm, I couldn't help thinking about Englishman John Hornby, how he died of starvation "on the other side," and whether acknowledging the spiritual power of the place would have meant a different end for him. Somewhere in his respect for the land I sensed a distinctive way of looking at land. It allowed him to translate what people told him about how to get some previously unvisited place into on-the-land navigational instructions that seemed to work. And yet, as we spoke about this, I got the distinct impression that there was more to this system of transferring knowledge of directions and locations than simple functionality: respecting the land, putting charcoal on your dogs' legs, and paying the land to acknowledge the larger forces of the place, were also part of the nexus of Boucher's trapping practice and his safe passage across a foreign ground. At eighty years old, this life is behind him now, and yet I couldn't help feeling a little sad for him when he sat back in his chair and spoke:

> I get really lonesome, especially at times of year when the snow starts to melt. It reminds me of the places I used to go. At times of the year like this, in spring, I used to go out for beaver and muskrats. Now I can't do that. I'm sort of lonely for what I used to do. I don't trap any more now.
>
> Right on top of Thelon River, when you look down, it looks very, very pretty. It has been quite a few years ago now. Right beside the Thelon, in the banks, in the hill, I have been trapping there, but I have never been on the other side, the east side. I have done quite a bit of travelling there on the Thelon River.
>
> We pretty well know where all the trees are. Even when you go out to the Thelon. When you get close to the Thelon, there is a lot of trees in that area, up on top of the hills, you can see the trees like that. It looks very beautiful when you look down from the hill, when you look down to the Thelon. The river is deep there. It is very beautiful.
>
> When you go to Thelon, in the old days, when you go on the other side, when people are not familiar with the area, what they do is take charcoal from the fire and they paint their dogs'legs around like that, with charcoal. They paint the dogs legs like that. And you pay the land too, with tobacco, or matches. If you're not too familiar with the land, then you have to do that. Sometimes if you don't do that, sometimes one of your dogs will just drop, just like that.
>
> I guess when you go on unfamiliar land, like that, you have to do that because dogs, they get ... something might happen to them because they're not too familiar with that area. That land is like that to a person too.
>
> Why we use fire charcoal is because fire is more powerful than anything else. If you take a metal and throw it in the fire, it's going to melt. It's the same thing, like that, when you put a mark on a dog like that, it helps when you go to a place like that.
>
> It's hard to get firewood in the Barren Lands. Sometimes you can just see the end of the wood, but we could use shovels and dig around to cut it from the bottom. That's the only way to get firewood. It was pretty hard. I had my own tent and my own

stove. I had to carry my own sticks to set up my own tent, because in the Barren Lands there wasn't sticks. I carried them on my sleigh. We made our own out of a ten gallon drum. We made our own stoves. It works very good because it's really hot.

I would go out and trap just from people telling me stories. But then there were lots of people at Resolution at that time. I went out with the people from this side, from Snowdrift. When they go trapping, I would go with them. So that's how I got to know the area. That's how I know the area pretty well now.

I can find it when they tell me where to go, when they tell me the places to look for. When I go hunting I try to find those places. Even here at the narrows, I even built a cabin there at one time. I had my children there at one time, and my wife.

When I go to a place like that, like the Narrows before. I don't know the area. I just hear about it. That's all. I hear the lakes being mentioned. But when I go out hunting for moose in the fall time, I look at there areas that people used to talk about, like the river is coming out of the lake, things like that. So I watch out for that. And then I find it, and then I know what kind of place is that. After that, when I go out with the dog team, I just follow the places where I went for hunting. I still keep on, follow the river where people used to talk about it. that's how I find it. And that's how I'm able to know the area really good.

(Laughing) Yeah, I remembered the land. I look at it I remember it. Sometimes when I do go out, I follow the rivers, and just keep going until I run out of traps. The places where I set all those traps ... I remember where I set all those traps. And then I go back and get more traps. Wherever I stopped before, from the end of the line, I carry on to where I want to be setting the traps. That's how I learn, because after I trap all that area, then I get to know all the area pretty good. I even try out fishing, with hooks, sometimes with nets. Sometimes there are a lot of fish, sometimes there are not. I find that out too, wherever I am trapping. So that would be for next time. When I get back I know where all the fish are and things like that.

When you're out there on the land, you're always looking. You're always looking to find new things. That's how I know all this area pretty good. I've never been to the other side of the Thelon though, just the west side.

We trappers, we watch the land very carefully, when we're going to go somewhere. Like the place I was talking to you about there, up at Hanbury Lake there. I mentioned there one time that there was a lot of trees, big trees, in that area. So when we go trapping, out travelling, we go to places like that. We go to places where we know of where there are lots of trees, for firewood, for our tent frames and stuff like that. And then from there, we all go out in different directions for white fox.

So from there, we know there is a lot of trees in that area. So when we leave from here, we still look for some trees. That's how we used to do it when we were trapping.

There is one story about Inuit. I am going to tell you a story about that person. Like when I've travelled I've never seen signs of Inuit guys, or Eskimo guy in that area. But there was one white person that was staying here and he had one Eskimo guy staying with him. His name was Jack Knox. He had his house up at Ptarmigan Lake, right here on this little lake below Ptarmigan Lake (pointing to the map). That's where he had the one Eskimo guy staying with him.

Him and that guy had an argument, and that Eskimo guy took off. He had a pack and a gun and he just took off.

There was two other white guys who was staying around there at that time. Jim Olson and Emile somebody. I don't know the last time. I know those two guys pretty good. There was one guy, name of old man William. There was three of them that was together, that old man and those two other white guys. And these two other guys took off for trapping.

The other guy, the old man, he was staying at Artillery Lake, at Crystal Island. And then this Eskimo guy, he came over here (to the Thelon) and he killed these two white trapper guys.

There was always three of them together before. The old man, heard the story about these two guys being shot, and he was really worried about his two friends. He went over there to see George Magrum, on the other side of Artillery Lake. He had his son living with him at that time. Billy, Billy Magrum. And he was worried so much, and that old man there he shot himself there one night.

So the cops came from Fort Reliance and then, I was in Campbell Bay that time and the cops came over to me, so I went with them. Then we got to George Magrum's place. When we got just on top of the hill, not too far from George Magrum's place, the cops told me to sit down and hang onto the dogs, to wait there. And then they took guns themselves and they went up ahead.

So when he was going up toward these guys there. The cop said when I make a sign, when I start to wave to you, you come. So they started walking over to that cabin, and the other person came out of the cabin, and then they started to talk. And then they made a sign for me to come. So I went over there.

That old man, where he shot himself, was outside there with a big canvas over him. There was a big canvas over him.

He shot himself right in the head, right below the jaw right here and right up through his head. He was stiff, frozen. I looked at it and then put the canvas back on again.

We stayed there one night. He's got his grave there around there somewhere. It was right in the big sand there, in the ridge. That's where he's buried there.

George Magrum told us that that old man, when he was down there, he was saying that some people were stealing food off him. Some people were bothering him and stealing food from him. That's what he was saying when he got over here. So what he did was he put all some poison into the food, into the meat, like that. So the next time people steal the food, they're going to get hurt, or something like that. That's what he told George. So George told the cops after this guy shot himself.

So Joe and the cops went down there and what they did was they threw everything in the fire, all the meat and flour and everything. They threw gas on it and burned the whole thing. There was lots of grub and we threw everything away.

I just remembered, the other trappers' name was Peterson.

Yeah. He was worried too much about his two partners who had got killed by this Eskimo guy. He went crazy and he did that.

He killed himself because he had poisoned the food and thought maybe he'd killed someone else. I think that's what happened. He figured he'd killed some people so that's what he did.

There is another story I'd like to tell you about the same person, the guy who was killed by the Eskimo.

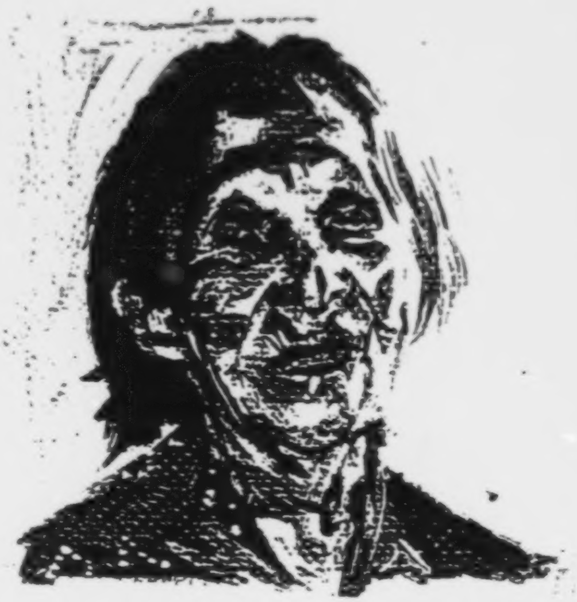
His name was Peterson, the white guy. He lived up there with his brother.

After this Eskimo killed these two white guys, he had their gun. He had the gun of the people that he killed. The first time, he went and visited the two guys, Peterson and his brother. He went and visited them and went out again.

The first day he came back, and then he seen their gun. And these two guys, they figured out what happened to those other two people. So the second time when he came back, the way I heard it was—my dad was telling me a story about it—I heard that when he walked in there and he sat down. He had Jim Olson's gun, this Eskimo guy. Peterson was washing knives, and he got up and went for a knife, like that. Right away this Eskimo guy, he went and grabbed this knife, like that. He thought he was going to kill him. But that wasn't what happened. That wasn't his intention. And then he killed the other person with a knife. But that was not the way he put it. The were saying we might as well kill him because he killed those other two people. So he said, "Me I'll go outside and get the gun, and you keep him company inside." So that's what they did. The other guy went outside. And this guy was inside. That guy opened the door and shot him right there. That's the way I heard it. They knew them two they were going to get killed if they didn't do that. So they killed that Eskimo.

The cops went there and got the body. There was a lot of white people at that time, trappers, at that time.

Marie Casaway



Eighty four year old Marie Casaway lives by herself in a small blue house not far from the Band Office in Lutsel K'e. It was here that Archie and I were able to speak with her. She sat at a small table beside the window and spoke for a short time about her life and travels on the barrenlands.

She spoke of living with her husband and three children in a tent, in the winter months. They would have to take with them two nights' firewood to get to the Thelon, and once there she remembered the huge amount of wood that was available for keeping the fire going. Often several families would travel together to the Thelon River. The husbands would go out and trap and the wives would stay back in the tent to look after the children and keep the fire going.

She said that they usually went for the Thelon when the snow would start to leave the tops of the hills and head back toward Great Slave Lake around Easter. She remembers everyone coming in off the land and meeting at Fort Reliance. At that time, she reckoned, there were no people living in Snowdrift.

Archie explained, as he did for all consultants in Lutsel K'e, the central questions in my research and how the conversations would be used. Marie agreed to speak with us for a short while. She spoke without leaving room for questions, and concentrated on the yearly round that she remembers:

In the spring the men would start to make canoes. They make it out of birch bark. The men they go out and look for good birch for their canoes. And us women, we go out and look for spruce gum. When they get the birch bark, they use some kind of root, a root that they use to sew the birch to keep it together. When they have sewn the birch together, they start to boil the spruce gum, and then they take it and put it on the sewn area. After they have done that, they put it out. They make a platform, out of logs, and put the canoe on top. We then put water in the canoe and look for holes where the water is dripping. Then they mark it on with charcoal, so they can fix it again, where there is a leaking area. After they have all done that, after they know the canoe is okay now, they start to make paddles. We would go to Fort Resolution after that. The young men (she laughs) did all the paddling out in the big lake. After we got groceries and things we needed from the store, we came back here. Then they start to get ready to go to the Barren Lands. They then go up towards the Barren Lands where they are hunting caribou.

When we got to where all the caribou is, then they make some dry meat and men are ready to go back now. They have enough food now, so they are ready to travel back here again. And then they have back packs on dogs. And the women, they go along the shore and carry the children. They have babies with them that are small, so they have to go along the shore, because there is not enough room in the canoe. And the men with the canoe, they have all that meat and all that stuff they carry around.

After they have come back from the hunting, the women then they start to sew together all of the hides, the caribou hides. These hides would then be used to make tipis to carry them through the winter that is coming up.

Just before freeze-up, they would do some fishing, take in some fish to cache. And then after they have done that, wherever there is caribou—people know from hair ... where is all the caribou—then people would all go down towards that way, where the caribou is.

Now you see children walking around. They have all these fancy jackets and stuff like that. In those days they just have caribou hides, with all the hairs on. In those days they used that. It's pretty hard to talk about it sometimes, because the way we—the people that were growing up here—the way they were brought, the things they were doing— they were very poor. Now I'm 84 years old. Those were tough times for me. Now we have all these food, like bread. In those days there were no such things like that. In the old days, they take fish guts—the fish eggs—they take that and cook it, and that's their bannock (she laughs). In the old days, tobacco was very scarce. They had chunks of tobacco. When they were smoking their pipes, because they didn't have much tobacco, they would go out onto the land and get some kind of weed from the ground. They bring it back and cut all that tobacco and mix it together (she laughs). And they have a little pouch and they would have it hanging over their arm. They carry it around like that. (she laughs) There was no cigarettes in those days. When I was young, I never smoke, only when I got married and I had three children, only then did I start to chew tobacco.

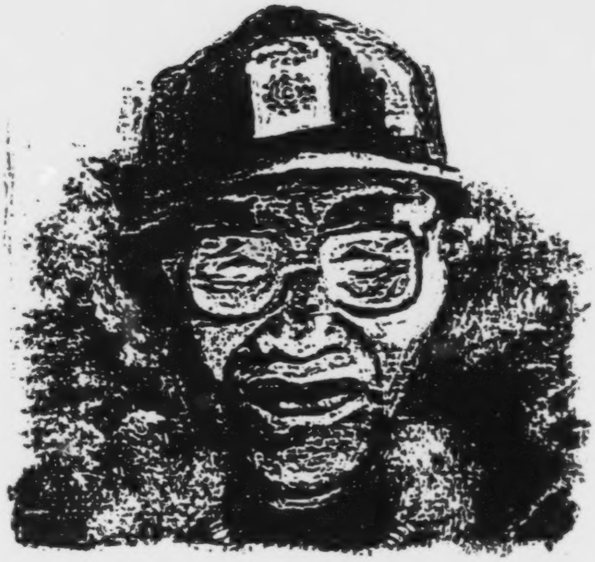
In those days it was very difficult, like I said. People were very poor at those times. Now, as you could see, everybody is very well off now. Before now, there is nobody that don't have any ... you don't see much people walking around with no mother or anything like that. It's not like that any more. You can see that everybody is helping each other like that—welcome somebody in.

In those days too, a long time ago, there is not much disease. There is no anything that is happening right now, cancer, TB, cold, things like that. There was no such thing as that in the old days.

A long time ago, they sort of had respect for animals. Because of that, it was the culture that they respect the animals and things like that. That's why there was no sickness in those days. But then when the whiteman started to come over here, and when they started to have their own food, and stuff like that, then all those diseases came into the country.

In those days, when we were growing up, there was a lot of scarce, like for clothing, and stuff like that. There was not enough food sometimes. We would go out and set some snares, we use rabbit to eat, and we would get the fur and use that for jackets and pants or whatever. That's how I was brought up.

Zepp Casaway



Before getting to Lutsel K'e, my introduction to 78-year-old Zepp Casaway was the transcript of a rather curt contribution he had made at the close of a community meeting regarding the East Arm-Artillery Lake National Park Proposal. He had ended his remarks (Casaway, 1981) by saying "We don't want people from the south to come and make plans for our land. ... If the chief wants another meeting about this he will write about it on a piece of paper. ... Pack up your map and go" (Cassaway 1981: 1-2). For this reason, apprehension spurred by the fact that Zepp was the first person Archie and I spoke to—a meeting set up by council member J.C. Catholique—I was afraid that Zepp would be less than keen about contributing to this research. I was quite wrong. But Zepp did begin with a general warning that was issued as much for Archie as for me. He said, "If you write down any misinformation, if we misunderstand each other, then it won't be good for us. You have to watch that carefully."

Zepp explained that he knew the barrenlands well as a result of 12 years trapping in that area. After Archie had told him what I was trying to find out, and how the conversation was to be used in the community and in the research, Zepp more or less just talked for the duration of our time together. He rambled, but the general theme of Thelon experience bound together everything that he said. I was struck by how well he seemed to remember these years of trapping that had happened perhaps fifty years earlier. Zepp was one of the first consultants who gave some inkling about the role of place names and stories in land knowledge that would last through the years. We spoke in the Band office:

> I have been in the Barren Lands, away up to a place called Thelon River. I have been there for twelve years, trapping. That area is really beautiful. There are all kinds of animals there, all different kinds. I have lived in that area very good when I was young. It still kind of helps me yet because it still feeds me.
>
> It's not like in the trees, because it is much colder in the barrenlands. Lots of times I have been down to Thelon because the road (the trail) going to the Thelon is much better for trapping. In the winter time it's hard to get fish in that area. For animals, how we survived in the Barren Lands, is caribou, jack rabbits, that's how we survived, using those animals for eating.
>
> The Thelon River is very big. In the winter time, when there are some places in the river, some openings, then in those openings we fish. That's how we fish. We have hooks and that's how we get out fish. It's hard to set nets in the winter. When you have to make a hole in the ice, it's very hard because it's very thick. When you try to make a hole in March, the ice is about eight feet thick. That's why it is very difficult to set nets.
>
> We watch how we trap in that area, or how we live around the area, in the barrenlands, in Thelon, because the only time we do that is when we see caribou that are migrating through.
>
> The only places, times, we stop is when we see little trees or little bushes that are sticking together. That is for fire and stuff like that. We stop at places where there are bushes like that because there is no trees in the barrenlands. Sometimes there are little twigs sticking out, and that's the places that we camp overnight, to make a fire to cook something with. The only time you might see big stick, big lumber, big tree is in the river.
>
> The only means of transportation in those days was dogs. And dogs were very helpful to us in those days, because in those days they didn't have no airplanes or no skidoos. In those days too we didn't see anybody using light clothes like canvas and things like that. We used only caribou hides. We have parkas and trousers and moccasins all made out of caribou hides. We have two kinds of clothes. We have one for hunting and trapping, when you go out on the land and it's very cold. You use the caribou hides that still have the hairs on them. Those is the ones that we use. But for working around the camp, getting wood and stuff like that, setting up camp, we had another pair for that. Those clothes were much lighter.

We have only axes in those days. We didn't have any swede saw. When we travelled in those days we had more than one axe—maybe two axe, because sometimes we would lose one axe, so we always had an extra one. Even guns too, it was like that. We would always carry a spare gun. For food, when we go out, if we have tobacco, matches, shells, flour, sugar cubes, and tea, and oats—we don't have coffee in those days—if we have that then we're okay for out in the barrenlands.

In those days when we have dogs, we have to watch very carefully when we're out hunting or trapping, because sometimes the dogs take off just like that without even hearing your command—without saying anything. So what we do is we have a long rope that is tied to us, if we're going to set a trap or something like that, just in case the dogs take off on you. All the things we had in the sleigh—I just mentioned tobacco and the food that we use. When the dogs take off on you like that. There is no trees to make fire in the barrenlands. That's it for you, when dogs take off. You're as good as dead.

I was in the barrenlands, trapping on the Thelon when I was 17 or 18 years old. I worked in the winter time trapping in the barrenlands. In the spring time I come up here and work in the bush, hunting for muskrats or beaver, something like that. There's still money there. No cash that time, nothing.

Sometimes when you're out in the barrenlands, and you don't have any blankets, like when you go out and you get lost, or something, and you don't know your way back—sometimes you have to get lost in the barrenlands because everything all looks the same. What we did is dig a hole in the snow. That's what we use for shelter. Even without a fire it's warm, when you make a shelter like that in the snow. If you close off the exit, it's really warm in there. Sometimes when you get stuck like that, you have to wait until it clears and you can see quite a ways from there, then you start to walk back where your camp is. So it's better when you get stuck in the snow, or it's too windy, it's better that you just take shelter right away, because you're going to get lost for sure. Because you don't remember where you're at.

When there is caribou, we have to follow it by dog sled. The dogs follow the caribou wherever they are. Sometimes when it's very close ... that's why I said the dogs are very helpful to us back in those days. We get some caribou, just enough to eat. Sometimes we set traps, just like those animals I talked about before. We take some meat and we set some traps, for furs, for white fox and stuff like that. When we have enough meat, we make some dry meat and we have a little bit of fat. Those were mostly the things I eat in those days, when I go out trapping and hunting.

When we shoot a caribou, there is always blood inside the caribou. And then we take some blood in a little sack from the stomach and then we freeze it and we keep it for when we boil some meat, and then there is some soup there in the water that we boil the meat in. There is some blood in there and we make it as a soup, and it's really very very good.

It's very important that we have firewood too, out in the barrenlands. Because it is very difficult to get some firewood. Anytime that we are travelling through, if we see good firewood, then we have to stop there and carry some if we have to. Even though when we're travelling, if we see a small twig, we'll take it. And then when we get back to the camp in the evening, then we use that for firewood too.

We have to have real good snowshoes. We have to have a good rope. We have to carry hooks too, even though it is hard to make a hole in the ice. Sometimes there are places where there is good fishing. There is a lot of fish out in the barrenlands. As soon as you find an opening in the water, then you set your hook and it doesn't take long to catch a fish, because there's a lot of fish in the area.

There is a lot of rocks, that's why we have to be very careful. Even though we are driving dogs around, we have to be very careful because when we hit a rock, the sleigh will break, and it's the only sleigh we have. That's why we are very careful all the time when we're driving our dogs.

It's a long ways from the mouth of Artillery Lake to Thelon River. It's the end of the treeline at the mouth of Artillery Lake. And then from there when we're travelling to Thelon River, it takes us four days to get to the Thelon. Straight going is four days. You mostly can go anywhere when you're travelling to Thelon River because it is barren. You can travel mostly anywhere you want on the land. I have been through a lot of places when I was living down there for those twelve years.

A long time ago, when I was small, I used to travel with my dad. My dad taught me what all these lake and this area is called. From there on, when my dad passed away, then I took over. In those days, all we did was trap. That was our main living. Living off caribou and animals and stuff like that. These kids that are growing up now, they don't go far. They're just around this area. They might go out for a week and then they come back. When I was growing up, we would be out all winter long. Even my grandfather was like that. My grandfather used to work all through that area and over toward the barrenlands. My father was like that too. My father was just like a map, because he knows a lot of places. Even though he doesn't speak English he knows a lot of places. He knows them in his own tongue, his own language. He names all the lakes. We have names in our own language for all the lakes.

Archie Catholique

I met Archie Catholique as a result of the kindness of the Lutsel K'e Band Council. As GNWT interpreter in the community it was Archie's job to tend to translation needs when required by the band. With the Band Council's support for this research came Archie as interpreter, without further charge for daytime interviews.

Archie had grown up in Snowdrift and had learned to speak and write Chipewyan from his parents. He went as far as grade six in the Lutsel K'e school before going to Yellowknife and Fort Smith for the higher grades. He dropped out of school in grade ten, but has since done upgrading to the grade eleven level. He explained that being born into a family and community ravaged by drugs and alcohol made it difficult to learn. He, too, became an alcoholic an an early age, and told me that he had to quit school eventually because he was drinking so much. "Nobody taught me that it was bad," he said. Getting elected to council in the late 1980s came at the same time Archie was realizing that he was getting too sick from alcohol and drugs to carry on. He had a desire to be a leader in the community. Along with all of the councillors who were elected that year, Archie went out for treatment. The man who became the link between this research and the elders of Lutsel K'e was very much a man well down the road to recovery from alcohol dependency. As a result of this experience in the community as a child and teenager, however, Archie had spent little time on the land. After our conversation with Zepp, Archie picked up on a casual comment made by the elder about the small amount of time young people spend on the land. Archie felt it necessary to present his side of the story, and took the time in our conversation to do that. In doing so, I began to realize that even growing up in the community—in a household ravaged by alcoholism—Archie had still developed a very strong almost mythological connection to land. And even though he has not spent as much time on the land as his father, or his grandfather, Archie still felt connected to the land, a connection that was reinforced by his own recollection of stories and place names he had heard about from his elders and by his own short forays onto the land. In many ways, as a member of a generation that has been separated physically from the land, Archie's comments demonstrated the depth and resilience of Chipewyan land knowledge and feeling. His comment about "open country" allowed me to see for the first time that land lives in Archie's mind as an overarching organizing concept through which, I began to see, he filtered almost every other thought. An example of land thinking of this sort was Archie talk of the Thelon as birthplace. Although he had never been there, this place was known to him as the place where animals and birds are born, a place of new beginnings for all animals. We spoke in his office in the Lutsel K'e Administrative Centre:

> When [Zepp] said that, I think I know what he was trying to say, like in the old days they had dogs to get from one place to another. They had to make their living. The only way to make a living , they had to hunt and trap and live on the land. There was no stores or anything like that. What I was trying to get at is that now, it is quite different. Now we have skidoos, and we have stores here now. But that doesn't stop us from doing what we want to do. We still carry on the hunting and the trapping and things like that. But when he said the young people don't go out on the land, to me that is not right, what he said. I know a lot of young people still go out and work that way, for wolves and stuff like that. But I agree with what Zepp said. They used to do it all year long. The young people, they don't do it all year long. They go out there and do it for three weeks or something like that, or a month, and then they'll come back. And then they'll wait again until it get warmer, or something like that. They'll take a break and then come back. That's the way it is today. It's not like the old days. In the old days you just had to stay there. The young people go out in the fall. You go out there just before freeze up. The plane will come and take you out there, any place you want to go. And then they'll freeze out there. They just wait until it freezes up and then they'll come back there for a holiday, for the Christmas holiday.

And then when you come back, you wait again, until around March when the wolves are starting to migrate at that time. Last fall they went out to their outpost camp, wherever their outpost camp was. But now with all that fur movement, the prices have gone down. People are not interested in going out because the prices are like that.

It was a couple of years ago now that the whole council went to Stoney Medicine Lodge and went through a program there. It was difficult for some guys. The first time we had councillors that were on at that time, two had to quit because they didn't want to take part in it. They figured that they didn't have to. So they had to quit, they had to resign. And we had to replace them with two other people. And that's the way it is today. We're not supposed to be involved with any alcohol or anything like that. We're supposed to be sober.

Sometimes I think about it. I think about if I'm still going to, maybe somewhere down the line, am I going to take another shot again. And then again, I've done that, like I've had a couple of slips before that. But then I knew that the life I had led before that, how bad it was, and how unhappy I was. Like that, it really helps me. After so long now, after a year, then I started to. The urge to have another drink sort of slips away. It's not in your mind anymore. So as the years go by, I guess it just slowly goes away. Now we're trying to find our culture. We know what it is. The land fits in there too. You've got to know the kinds of things you need from the land, the kind of medicine you should use.

And there is still the old people, they still use some. Like willows, sometimes when they have a cold, they take that. Or when you have a cut in your hand then put spruce gum on there, and it heals. Things like that we're starting to go back to it. Even our medicines, we're starting to get it back and be able to use it. In the summer time, we go to Parry Falls. That too is a big thing for us. There we get help. If you are sick in anyway, you can just ask for help there. Ask the old lady, wash yourself with water. Or you can take the willows I was telling you about, you can use that.

I know we use a great deal of land. We're the only people up here in the north that use this amount of land. Like if you look at the people up around Great Bear Lake, up in Dogrib Nation, they don't have that much land. The communities are pretty close. When you look at us on the east side, we use quite a bit of land. For that reason, we didn't feel too right about it when they said we have to give up land.

The way we have it right now is best—it's like open country. I'm not too happy with such things as when you have reserves. Reserves are just like—you're just blocked in there. And if something is going to happen beyond the reserve, let's say you're going to start a pulp mill up the river, up the Snowdrift River, and you're inside a reserve, you can't do nothing about it. You've already given away your land up there. How are you going to stop that? So I think, like most places, spiritual sites, we should ask for protection.

Thelon is the place where all the caribou and all the birds, that's where they migrate to. That's where they lay their eggs. Caribou, that's where they get their calves. That's where all the animals are born. That's where it is. That's why we are saying that you really have to watch that area. It's like protecting the spiritual site. It's your livelihood. Without that, how are you going to survive? That's what it is, it's a place of new beginnings for all the animals. Even that elder, when he was telling you that there was so much ptarmigan at that place, that's the same thing. That's where all the ptarmigan lay their eggs. That's where the feeding ground is good. And then in the fall time, they come back this way. The same thing with the caribou.

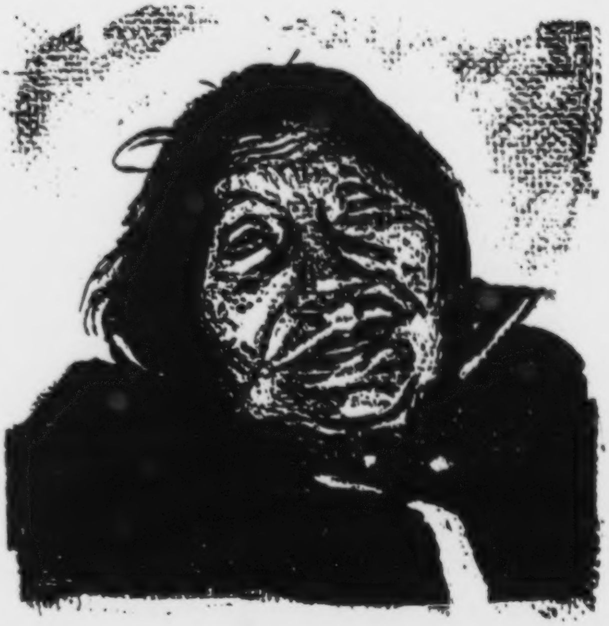
Before, when the town was still drunk, people didn't know what was happening in the surrounding area. They didn't know what was happening to them. The were losing all the things that they owned. They didn't care much about that. But after they sobered up, there's a lot of things that they found out that ... people are just going around like that. There was that one fellow from the States who just built his cabin just like that. So we questioned that. We questioned the territorial government about that. So we told them that, that even before the landclaims are settled, you have to come over here and talk to us about it. The guy just went ahead like that. It happened in Yellowknife where he just had to buy some kind of permit. But he went through Yellowknife to do that. So we told Yellowknife that it is not right. You should come to us and talk to us about it. And the next thing, this other guy who just bought the Frontier Fishing Lodge, he went to the government to see if he could get another licence to go out for caribou in the winter time and stuff like that. And then, at that time, the government knew what was happening, so they told him that you have to go back to Snowdrift, and let the Snowdrift people know first. But some of them, they get away with it. Like out in the Barren Lands, there's one place where they are looking for minerals, or something like that. Things like that we have to really watch that. But the only time that respect came is when all the leaders came out for treatment. Things started to happen.

My grandfather was a medicine man. Two of them. But I haven't seen them. But my dad told me a lot of stories when we were out in the bush. When I was 13 years old. We went out trapping like that. All my sisters were in school. They had to go out to Smith, and Yellowknife, and I was the one that was left here. I had to be able to get some wood. That's the way it was. That was the old way. The young men are there for hunting and trapping. That's their way, my parents' way. My dad wanted to teach me that part, I guess. He never took me out of school. But he taught me how to trap, how to survive in the bush. So I went with him for a couple of years, in the bush, trapping and stuff like that. We went in the fall and in the spring. That helped me lots. He taught me a lot of stories, old time stories and medicines. He told me the old lady falls story, for example. I remember when he used to say that when we were trapping out close to Fort Reliance. I was quite young and I really didn't really quite have it in me, all this medicine stuff, this spiritual stuff. But later on I went through growing up as a young man. But as I told you, I was involved with the alcohol so much that I haven't really gotten around to doing things like that. I think we're quite lucky that we still have our elders with us yet. There are still are some elders who could carry on the stories to us, for us to carry with us. We're quite lucky in that.

The stories of the elders have to be our teaching, you know. To be able to carry on. The spiritual things and what they mean to us, what we are come from them. We can't change that. We are native people. We will always be native people. And so it always has to go with the native people. So it has to be carried on from the next generation to the next generation. So that's how it's got to be taught.

There is one thing that I have that is always carried down from my elders: a respect. A respect for the land. There is a lot of respect that I know about the land to be able to watch it. Some people, when they have a lot of berries, or something like that, they really watch it. The don't run around the area because next year they won't get much berries, or things like that. Things like that you really have to watch. Lets say you go out somewhere on the land where you have never been before, you have to pay. You have to pay the land, because it's not your land, or something like that. You have to pay him that, saying you're just there for a few days. And it's that kind of respect. Or sometimes when you make a fire, you pay the fire to show that you are grateful for what has happened there, or whatever, things like that. You pay the land or the fire with tea, or tobacco. They say tobacco is the main medicine. So we use tobacco a lot. Tea is like that too. We use that a lot too.

Annie Catholique



My conversation with Zepp Casaway's 73-year-old sister Annie Catholique had a memorable beginning—she started out with a tirade on the subject of white people and why Indian people have many many reasons not to trust them. She seemed angry and put-out to be included as a possible consultant in this research. When she had finished, I thanked her for her thoughts and suggested that now was a good time for Archie and me to leave. "No, no," she said. "That's what I think. It is important you know that before we talk any further." From that point on we had a most enjoyable and informative conversation.

She told me that her family had moved up from the Fort Smith area and that they had lived at Timber Bay on Artillery Lake. At that time, she thought, people didn't live around where the current village of Lutsel K'e is located. We talked about everything from musket balls to diapers. It was the first time, she told me, that she had spoken to anyone about life on the land in this way. "I normally don't tell stories like that. A lot of people have asked me to tell stories, but I always say no," she informed me at the end of our conversation. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to speak with Annie. The most obvious contribution Annie made with respect to how Chipewyan people know land was her straight ahead reminder about the sanctity of that knowledge and her comments about how the "way" of the

Creator is embodied in the animals, where they live, and what they eat. And Annie was one of the first people who spoke about the imposition of the Sanctuary, illustrating the deep roots of her mistrust of white people and highlighting the absence of consultation with native people in the 1920s when the original border of the Thelon Game Sanctuary was established. We spoke in her house:

> I don't trust white people. It's not your fault. It's the federal government's fault that there's a lot of people that have mistrust in other white people that come around here. And now, people come up here—biologists and people like that—they count caribou and things like that. It's going to run out those caribou, because there is still the amount they had before. It's still like that today. A lot of people here are really against some of the people that come here that put tags on animals that shoot up caribou with different kinds of chemicals. This is our livelihood. That is why we are against what some of the people are trying to do to the animals. They say if we went out towards their land, these white people, they wouldn't like that if we go on their land. We have respect for their land. If we go on their farm where they have potatoes and vegetables, we won't go there and just take a potato or carrot out of their fields, that's what kind of respect we have for them. Them, they're not like that. When they go on our land, they just go ahead and do whatever they please. They think they can do anything. They dig holes in the ground. They chop down trees, without even asking permission of the area, of the rightful owners, the natives. They don't ask questions like that. They just go ahead and do whatever they want. There is a lot of damage that they have done. This is not their land. They have done a lot of damage to it. Even the fish are spoiled by all this pollution. Even around here we won't be able to drink the water pretty soon. Even this water thing, this water plant, that was brought in here two or three years ago by the government, I guess, and take the water right along the shore here. All we drink is tea. We make tea, and the tea is just black. You can look into the cups and it's just dirty. The water itself looks okay, but it's when we make tea that we notice the difference. Things that are around here now, things that are happening, the bad things that are happening, the things that are not working good—it's the people who live here who have to try and fix it up, to make it work. All these things that are around here now. Like that power plant. It spoils the water. It's too close to the water. I just want you to know what's happening, what's happened from the white people, the kind of damage that's happening, not like before.
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> When my dad was raising us up, we were brought up in the bush. There is no nurse in those days, no doctor or anything. When my dad was the main hunter for us. He always goes out in the land and gets caribou or moose or whatever so he can feed us. That's how we were brought up. This land has been here for a long time. My mother and father had white hair. Even before their time, even them too, they were living off the land. Nothing has ran out yet. Everything is the same as it was before. There is a lot of caribou yet, and fish, and things like that. In my dad's children's time, in my time, we still lived off the caribou, and off food from the land.

It was been put here by the great spirit, all the animals. As you can see it has never run out yet. We use all the caribou, when we get a caribou. We eat the meat. The hides we use for our moccasins, our jackets, whatever. When we make tipi, we would use over 30 caribou hides. When we sew it together, in the back, the spine, there is things we cut out of the back, the spine, the sinew that we use to sew it together. After it's dried you take the meat out and roll it together. We have needles from somewhere. The needles were around then. But that too was limited, so when it was very dull we had to file it with files. Even matches too—there wasn't much matches. From the birch there is the little dry thing, you can tear it off, it burns very well. We would carry that around too. We have these flints here. We had dry twigs and we would make it really dry. And we have some white rock from the Barren Lands. You carry that around too. And you take the rock, hit it against the flint, like that, and spark will fall into the dry twigs. Before, the way you were brought up, you always have the wisdom of the elders. Now, it's not like that.

We lived quite a ways out in the Barren Lands. It has been a long, it is a long ways, we even used muskox. We used muskox in those days too. I don't know why, even today, why the muskox animals were shut off from us. Even today, I don't know why. There is a lot of people who died off who could have used the muskox for food. It has been a long time now since the government people said that you're not allowed to shoot. But now whenever a calf, a female muskox has their young, they usually have two. And now, because it has been a long time, there should be lots of muskox in there now. They used to sell the fur before. A long time ago, they used to do it a special way so that they could just take the meat out, the whole animal out of the skin. They used to sell it like that. Sometimes down south, I hear people talk like that. They used to use it for mounting. I've seen some pictures about it. Those things that were sold a long time ago, they are still kept today. As I mention again, those ones too [the muskoxen] have been counted. And that's the same thing as the caribou. They have been writing down on paper, how much there is.

The Thelon is a special place. Yes. There is a great spirit and there is a bad one, the devil. They're always fighting amongst each other, him and the great spirit. The great spirit brought up his hands like that to the east, into the barrenlands. And then these rocks are formed by the devil, when the great spirit pushed up against the devil. These rocks are over near Thelon. Nothing is impossible for the great spirit.

When they talk about land, even today they talk about land—land claims. For me, it's kind of funny, when I think about the great spirit. I find it very funny when they talk about this land, all the things that we use, all the things that we survive on, like animals, caribou and those things. They start to talk about it and I find it very funny. Who is going to do all these things [speak about the land]? If I'm not working on it, who else is going to say something about these things if I don't say something?

When we were living off the land out in the Artillery Lake area, when we make sleighs, we make our own sleighs. We make it out of birch. There is no nails in those days. When you get a rope, you use it from caribou hide. You take all the hairs off and they got a bone they call a scraper, and they scrape off all the stuff that's on there. And then after the hide is cleared up, they cut it to make rope.

With that hide we make rope and we use the rope to make snowshoes. They have a little metal, a little pointed metal, like a nail, and they have caribou antlers for a handle, like it's stuck in like that and it's pointed. And they use that to make snowshoes, to punch holes through the birch. And teepees. When you start to fix the snowshoes, it's very cold in the teepee when you start to make these things.

In those days, we don't have shells like we have now. In those days, we didn't have that. We had really long guns in those days. We had to use those sticks to load the gun. All that has been done. Only when you see something, you pull the hammer back to get it to hit the flint. For one year, they have five—they had muskets in those days, and they had powder—balls. They had five balls for one year. So what they do is when they shoot a caribou, sometimes the ball gets stuck inside the meat, and they take it back and use it again. Sometimes it goes through and falls at some point into the snow. And then they go out and dig around in the deep snow, maybe five feet deep to find the ball.

Even stoves, it was nothing like that in those days. We just had a fire in the middle of the teepee. It was really cold! For us older people it was okay, but how about for children? That's really cold. It was really poor in those days. We didn't have a nurse. Before it was really bad. We were poor people in those days. For babies we used moss for diapers. They have a spoon made out of wood, and they would throw all that snow out and they would look around for the moss. Then they would use that moss for diapers. When you are searching for moss, you find a soft spot in the snow. Then you throw all that snow away. And then when you cut the moss for diapers, you don't cut the moss that is reddish in colour because that is no good. When you find it you have to cut it out because it is all frozen. And then you have to back pack it and bring it back home like that. You cut up the moss with sort of a saw. And when I cut it, I make it really thin, and then I hung it up to dry on racks in the teepee. You got to watch it too. You have to have a little bit of heat. You can't have big flames because the moss will burn. When they put the diapers on, they would get a rock and put in the fire, and when it was warm, they would use the diaper around and use the rock to warm up the diaper. And then after they have done that, they would put it in a caribou skin and fold it up around the baby. They would use a string and pack the baby around like that.

In those days, when they're out like that, the man doesn't go away without leaving food for the family. I even put on snowshoes and go out and set snares. That too you had to cut down trees to set snares. They would use fresh cut trees for bait for the rabbits. If a man is gone a long ways, that too, when the woman is left behind, she goes out and sets snares for rabbits. You could tell, when you look at the land like that, what land was good for a rabbit, where a rabbit stays. When you go out there, you set snares where it is good.

When you understand these things, when you look at these things—caribou, moose and rabbit—they all live off the ground, the moss or whatever they eat. They're even fat, when you think about it. So that's the way the Creator put it on there. That's the way it's supposed to be. It's just a matter of teaching the children. When you look around, when you find an elder like me, then these elders will teach them how to live off the land. Before, there were no games for kids to play with. Sometimes we would make a bow and arrow and that's what they would play with. It's hard to own a couple of knives then because they're scarce. You have only one. That's why in those days, because of the scarce, because of the limit, that's why there wasn't much for the kids to play with. You don't play with that. We watched things like knives very carefully, so as not lose them.

J.C. Catholique

The man who was pivotal to the success of this work in Lutsel K'e was J.C. Catholique, my quiet and wise teacher in the community. On my first meeting with the Chief (at the time) Felix Lockhart, in November 1990, J.C. was the person to whom he directed me when I spoke of possible education spin-offs from the research. J.C. welcomed me into his home and from that point on supported the work to its completion.

Trained in the south as a journalist, J.C. had filled a variety of jobs in the community. He too had been part of the council that had gone out for treatment for alcohol abuse, but had been one of the first of his generation in the community to break the habit. His official roles in the community during the course of this research were as band councillor and Coordinator of the Chipewyan Language Centre in the local school, but even as a man in his mid-thirties J.C. seemed to be rapidly growing in stature within Lutsel K'e as a new generation spiritual leader. J.C. told me that he had learned a great deal from Harry Stoney, a spiritual advisor from the Nut Lake Reserve in Saskatchewan, and also that connections with the Navajo Nation in the American Southwest had been helpful too in restoring Chipewyan culture in Lutsel K'e. It was J.C.'s contributions in the council meeting at which the research was actually given the go-ahead that allowed his fellow councillors to see merit in supporting the work. We spoke on many occasions, twice on tape.

J.C. taught me many things, especially about the deep connections between the Chipewyan people and land. He helped me see that land as provider of everything his people require to live, including a sense of not only where they are but who they are. J.C. helped me understand that this internalized view of land is reflected in the Chipewyan sense of time and in their understanding of the Creator. Although, like his brother Archie and most other people under forty, J.C. had not been himself to the Thelon Game Sanctuary area, it was positioned in his head as "God's Country." He also had much to say about notions of ownership and the effect the church has had on the separation of Chipewyan people from the land. In sum, J.C. clearly illustrated the interconnectedness and complexity of Chipewyan land knowledge. We spoke on tape once in the living room of his log home and once in his office in the Lutsel K'e school:

> I guess land to the Chipewyan people is pretty well everything. It is a way of life for them. The land provides them with food, clothing—it provides for them principles of life. They consider land to be very spiritual. When the old people talk to us—the elders—they talk about land, they say "Notsina" meaning god or Creator or great spirit. They put us here for a reason. We've got to respect all of the things he made for us. Respect water, trees, plants, all the animals that fly, also the universe up in space. So they respect land in a spiritual sense. Because without land, they can't practice what the Creator has given them. If you put them on a piece of land, a reserve or something like that, they are only limited to a certain area. Right now, we don't live on reserves so the kind of perspective that people have here is pretty broad.
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> Land to them is not like the way Europeans take it. Land to a European can be bought and sold in exchange for money, or trade—that sort of negotiation. The Chipewyan people, they always wonder why government is always asking them for land, or why they are always talking about land in general. The old people say, "There is nothing wrong with the land. Why are they talking about land?" I guess they have to understand that land in a European sense has a monetary value in minerals, water, tourist potential—a lot of renewable resources that's there from which the Europeans can gain in terms of business, in terms of money. As far as the

Chipewyan people are concerned, they like to live off the land. They like to go out—sometimes they go flying out by plane, away out to Artillery Lake, or the barrenlands. That's where people used to live up there, before. Away out— Artillery Lake, the Barren Lands, Thelon River—all over the place. They say there are still historical marks like tipi rings, rocks, things that you can find out there, like arrowheads. There are also spiritual places out there. There is a lot of animals out there. Like the caribou. That's where their calving grounds are, out there.

The land provides everything for them. All the trees they can make things out of, all the animals— hides, they can make clothing. The lakes, they provide fish. I mean for us it's just like going to Super A [a grocery store] (he laughs). You don't have to pay [money] for it. You pay for it in the way you respect the land. A lot of people, before they eat, they pray. Some of them feed the fire—say put a piece of meat on the fire. They respect. That's the way they give thanks to the Creator.

There's spiritual place up on Lockhart River, near Fort Reliance. There's a place up there now that we go to. It's a spiritual retreat I guess. We've been doing that for the last two rivers. It's about halfway up, about eleven miles from the mouth of the river. There's a special place there. There's a falls that comes down. In the past, when people are sick, or something is bothering them, then they go there. They make their offering and they pray. There's a woman they say, in that falls. From way back, the way legend has it, she went in there. They say that she's going to be sitting there until the end of the world. She's like a connection to the Creator. People go there. They get healed and stuff. A long time ago she didn't get her share of beaver blood. And so she got mad and left her people. She hid in that falls. She was a very powerful medicine woman. Medicine people are special people; god gave them a gift to help people, to heal them, like that.

I try to learn as much about spiritual things in connection with land, animals, like that. I know that the land provides them with special plants for healing. Different kinds of trees, different parts of the trees for different kinds of sickness. That's the kind of knowledge that the land provides. And that's the kind of knowledge that the elders were seeking when they were younger. That's the sort of thing they were told. So those kind of knowledge have been passed on to us. And we try to carry on that way. One popular one is rat root. They use rat root for colds, arthritic pains. There is another one too, they call it Labrador tea. It's good for cleaning out your system. You get sick and it makes you kind of piss everything out. Also it's good for colds too, they say. That's what I use sometimes when I get sick. I go out and pick a bunch of that. Boil the whole plant and just drink it.

The elders have been really helpful. In the last few years they have been really open. They have been coming to public meetings, public functions. They give a lot of advice and guidance, like that. They try to give direction to the leadership. So they have been really helpful. It doesn't really go by age. It goes by how you can get people to work together, how to follow a way of life that has already been set. They call it "dun-chun-yeh" it's like culture, our culture, that's what it is. We have a culture that has been given to us by the Creator. Language has been given to us by the Creator, like that. So we've got to follow that way. He [an elder] knows the importance of a way of life. Everybody becomes an elder, sometime, later on in life, when you establish yourself in the Chipewyan ways. When you establish yourself, you find your place. The chief is not necessarily an elder, but he gets a lot of help from the elders. I guess there is a certain point—the way that talk to people, the kind of respect you get from people, like that. You can be like an elder that way. As long as you help people, people will listen to you. I think we have like a total of fourteen elders. Like we just use it from 65 over. But there is always one, usually the oldest one, who is senior.

I understand that the Thelon Game Sanctuary was formed because too many animals were being killed and people were getting lost because they were hunting with not knowing where they were at. When you're there in the winter time, it's like a desert. There is snow all over. You don't know what's lake and what's not. There are places where there are trees and you can go and camp there. But if you don't know those places, you probably won't last very long. So there is an area of land out there where all the animals centre themselves—the caribou calving grounds, a lot of grizzly bears, and bears, moose, like that, foxes, right around the Thelon. And what we understand from the old people is that one year they just said "There is an area where you can't hunt. You can't hunt in there." And then the muskox was banned. So they couldn't hunt for muskox. I think caribou was one of the animals they couldn't hunt too, but that didn't last very long. That Sanctuary was formed without consultation. All of a sudden the game officials came along and said you can't hunt there any more. The people from outside would think there was nothing there because in the Barren Lands there is hardly anything there. The Chipewyan people call the place "hazuk'e" It means a desert place, the Barren Lands. It's also like a Sanctuary for animals there—foxes, caribou, moose, everything.

You don't have to go to the Thelon Sanctuary to say that it's part of who we are. Like you just know that. That area, it's part of you. It's part of your country. The furthest I've been is up around Artillery Lake, Whitefish Lake with my Uncle Noel (Drybone). I spent one winter with him up there, just to see what it's like, because I've been to high school most of my life. I had to learn something about our way of life. It was hard, but I wouldn't call it work. You do a lot. You do a lot of work. You travel around a lot. You trap. I'd like to see the Thelon area in winter. I'd like to get a group together in summer and go to Beaverhill Lake. That's part of our area. We should learn something about it. Take pictures. Look around. They've got a lot of arrowheads up there. I know my cousin Lawrence has some arrowheads from out there. So we're thinking about going out there, probably some time this summer. Just charter a plane. It's easy now, just charter a plane. It was hard before. Sometimes they just walked. The way my uncle tells me, the Thelon is God's country there. To him it's God's country there. There's a lot of animals there. There's a lot of trees there—everything a person needs is there.

People here they have their own sense of time. There's a lot of dependency on the weather, because you travel on the land. And if it's snowing, or a blizzard, or something like that, you can't go anywhere. It's one of those things that's like discipline in a person is that you've got to have the patience to wait. You've got to know that the principle of living off the land is that you don't rush. You've got to be prepared, because there's a lot of things that could happen out there. You've got to be prepared just in case you have to bed down, or else something happens, like in the party, if you're travelling, travelling in a group. And so anybody prepares. And nobody does anything until everyone is ready. That's the way it's always been. It's not like going to work at nine in the morning (he laughs) and you're late or something. It's not like that. Out here, especially when things are being done out on the land, people try to prepare themselves. There's a lot of preparation too, you know. You don't just pack your things up all in one day, and move. There's a lot of thinking behind it. There's a lot of possibilities, things that might go wrong. So you have to prepare for things like that. I know we have a lot of problems sometimes, when people come from outside, come in here. The meeting is supposed to start at seven, and they know from experience that it won't start 'til eight. That's the way it is. You know. So that we accept those things. I know it's kind of irritating for some people from outside because they're conditioned to time—time for this, time for that, time for this and that. But here, you haven't got into one of our meetings yet. Some meetings we want to start at six, sometimes we start at eight and we don't stop until one in the morning. It goes like that. You go past midnight. Even with government officials, it goes like that too. They sit there, you know, they get used to it.

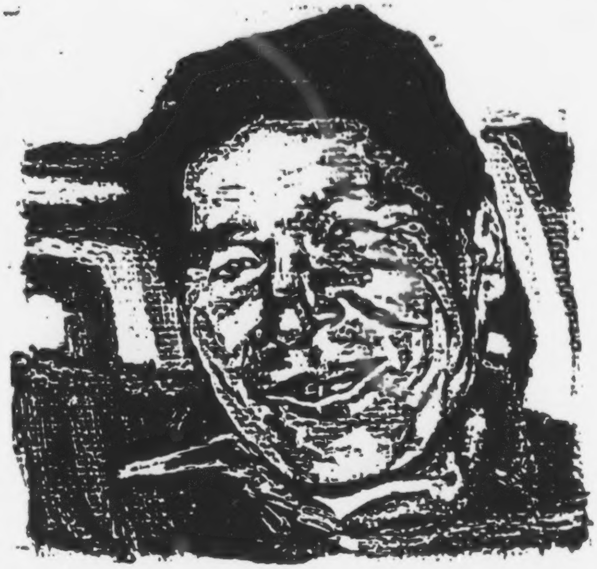
They say that—old people say that when we came in this world, we don't really own anything. Nothing. We came here with nothing. The only thing that we own is time. We can call it ours, I guess. That's the only thing. Anything else, we don't own. Material things, we just pass it on, like that. But time, you can't. Time is something that you own, that's yours. Whatever you do with it, that's up to you. That's the only thing a person owns. This is a lesson from the land.

My dad grew up in the barrenlands. And he says sometimes it would blow for three days. Just a blizzard out there. You can't go nowhere out in the barrenlands like that because everything gets whiteout and you can't see nothing. And your sense of travel depends on landmarks, where you're going, where you're coming from. You have to remember those. So if it's a blizzard, a whiteout, there's no sense of direction. You get lost. And so he said, sleep is really very powerful. He said you can sleep for three days, just like nothing. He said there's nothing to it, sleeping. You just sleep, just like that. He said you get used to those kind of conditions, because there is a lot of discipline. When you're out there, you have to know what you're going to do with your time. You develop those things.

There might be some repairs that you got to do, or mending that you got to do, things like that. You have a lot of time to make things, like perfect. You do a good job especially if you have the time.

I know that in the past, the practice of Indian religion was placed in a position where it was taboo. You're not supposed to practice your religion. You're not supposed to practice things that are spiritual, native ways. But when I started to think more about it, I come to the conclusion that it's okay. Now, it's okay to let people from outside know. Let the world know that we have our own form of worship, and that people should try to understand it. Even if it means that certain things that have to be explained, in a certain way. Photographs are okay, as long as it's done after ceremonies. As far as writing things about it, I guess it's got to be from the standpoint of a personal viewpoint. I think it's better that way. Like you can't really see like too much from the native point of view. The only thing you can probably say is that we are trying to get back to our native religion, native spirituality. And the medicine will probably help us regain a lot of our cultural ways that have been lost. This place here is really Christianized. The Roman Catholic church came in here and really dominated their beliefs, on the old people here, to such an extent that there is a lot of authority from the priest. It's like a dictatorship, in a way. He is saying their religion is a lot better than the native religion. And if you don't listen, you're going to go to hell. And so they scare a lot of people that way. A lot of our old people thought that these people are from like from God. God sent them to help us. But he has created more harm to us because through that process we managed to lose our language, lose our culture. It was important. We lost our spiritual belief in our own way. A lot of old people say that the Creator put us here for a reason, and we have to follow that, those principles, that he gave us. Not to be like someone else. Not to adopt another form of belief. Like we already believe there is a God. It's a guy, a person, that made this world, put the animals there for us, water, everything, all life forms. Like he made all those things. We believe that. And so we pay our respects, the way he wanted us to do. And so we try to follow that. But the Roman Catholic church came in and said, "No, that's not the way. Our way is the only way." So a lot of our old people went with the Roman Catholic church. And so now, for us young people now, that went through that Roman Catholic church, their system and their way of life—like the residential schools and that, we've come to believe that there is a certain way that we were given to pray to god, or to the Creator, and that we have to follow those ways. A lot of these spiritual ways is not lost. It's just not being practised. So with this medicine, like the way that I understand it, it was given to native people to help them with their struggles. That's the way I understand it. So right now, we're struggling to keep our language alive, to keep our culture alive, to keep our spiritual ways, to find our spiritual ways. And so if we humble ourselves to the Creator, maybe he'll have pity on us and give us back those things we've lost. It's a new beginning for us. It's a rebirth, like a spiritual awakening, to find ourselves again. To teach those things to our children, to our people, and also to make people from outside try to understand what we're trying to do.

Pierre Catholique



Pierre Catholique was the only person in Lutsel K'e who came forward to contribute to this project before he was asked to do so. We met on the street one afternoon and he told me some stories, right there, about trapping in the vicinity of the Thelon River. I asked him at that time if we could speak on tape. He agreed. We met at his home and spoke largely in English, with occasional help and contributions from his wife Judith, an interpreter at the Lutsel K'e Nursing Station for 19 years.

Pierre told me that he was born in Snowdrift in 1929 and that his first memories were of living at Fort Reliance, near the mouth of the Lockhart River. At different times, he lived on Artillery Lake and out around the Hanbury River. The story he told me on the road when we met was about going with the RCMP and delivering mail to all of the white trappers who inhabited the land east of Artillery Lake in the early 1940s. He said that people lived in the Artillery Lake area and eastward in winter and in summer, trapping all around the area. He was careful to tell me that he and his father never trapped in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. In fact he remembered the police taking Gus D'Aoust's trapping licence for illegal trapping when D'Aoust was living at his camp at Whitefish Lake. The predominant impression Pierre left with me after our conversation was just how many places he pointed to on the map, between Artillery Lake and the Thelon River, had

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attached to them in his mind names, faces and stories. He talked about living in the barrenlands the way one might expect a person to talk about a home neighbourhood, despite the fact that the last time he was there was 1947. And of particular importance in what Pierre said was his understanding that the government had established the Sanctuary for one year only. Here are excerpts of our conversation.

We know the country. You use those sand ridges to know where you are [eskers]. From here, one big one to Williams Lake. There is one here always to Williams Lake. You could follow that. That is the one you can follow to Campbell Lake. Yes. It starts right here. You hit that ridge at Artillery Lake. Really good country. People know where they are. Sometimes in a big storm, you get lost, but not very often.

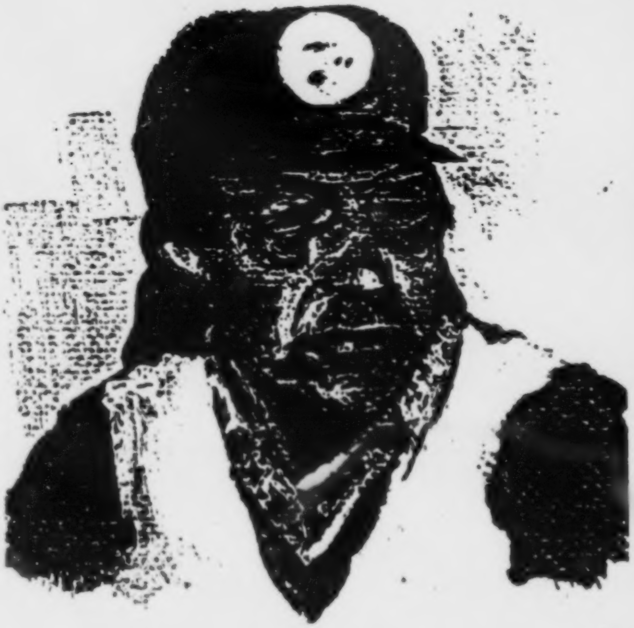
Dogs are better. Good leader dog is smarter than people. That's what Gus D'Aoust say in his book. You can't see nothing. The dog can follow his trail. You get lost, you don't bother, you make home. One time, Maurice Lockhart—he's still alive—there is no wood where we camped. So we get wood, but six miles out. When we cut that wood a storm come in. We try to go back out, I don't know where. Nothing can see it. So we try to make it home. We got rifle, that's all. No grub, nothing. So we let him go, that leader. This dog used to be my dad's dog, that leader. So me I tied my dog behind him and two dog team go together. You couldn't see nothing. Not even that far (he points to the distance across the kitchen table). The snow was strong, blowing in your face too. Always like that. Where is that camp, we don't know. But that dog, he go back beside the tent. We stopped, couldn't see nothing. We look for something and can't see nothing. But we see a stick there, so we touch it. It's the tent (covered up with snow)! Smart dog. The dog has been there before, so he knows the trail. When he hits that trail, he knows that. He's smarter than people. Without dogs, we would have been lost. No, nothing. No compass either. Just follow—you know the hill like that, sometimes rock, that's where you follow those places back. It's hard. Some people get lost. When the sun shines, okay. Dogs help a lot.

We used to take the mail from Fort Reliance to here, to here, over to Whitefish Lake. A lot of people. Altogether, about twenty different white people camped on the barrens. It started in 1929. Old Gus came in '30, 1930. Two years before, white people came in. Hornby came there, at that time. White people fly from here. They would trap all winter and go to Edmonton in summer. White people get a lot of fur, some of them. Sometimes they would leave there dogs here and go to Edmonton. They would come back in September. Two weeks from Reliance to Beaverhill Lake: one week out and one week back. We would break trail all the way. We would all visit each other, everyone who trap. Gus D'Aoust and his brother Phil, and Hughie, has three brothers, and Evan and Joe Nelson, old man by himself; and old Jack

Knox, look after this (points to Sanctuary), work for government. And Price, a lot of them, about twenty white people. Lots of Indian people on the land then too. Families stay here. People go trap here. Sometimes three people together, sometimes four people together. Always two—two or three or four.

The Sanctuary is supposed to be for muskox. Before people get muskox and sell the hide. That was a long time ago. My dad he did that. Sometimes, people lost and not much muskox too, so the government closed it. Closed it for one year! Government fool the people. They said they would close it for one year! And it's still closed (he laughs). He's lying. The government is lying. That's what all the people told me. They would close it only for one year. Maybe they mean ... 100 years (he laughs). People maybe sign it. Indian people—chief—maybe sign it. I don't know if anybody signed it. Don't care about it now. Get rid of it. Because somebody tried to go in. It's good country. A lot of wood there. That's what he [Gus D/Aoust] say in the book. Lot of wood in there. Good country for trap. A lot of white fox in there. Sometimes people sneak in and trap. You must pay the land. Yeah, we do that. Beaverlodge (points to the south end of Artillery Lake) in here. You put something when you pass. When you go to Barren Land, you give him something, tobacco, matches maybe. Beaverlodge you call him.

Felix Lockhart



When first inquiries were made to Lutsel K'e about the prospects for doing this research, band chief at the time was Felix Lockhart. A thoughtful and considerate man in his early forties, it was Felix who had returned to Snowdrift from life elsewhere and, during his eight years as chief, was in the vanguard of the campaign against alcoholism in the community. Our chance to speak on tape came in a tent on Campbell Lake. Perhaps because we spoke inside the original boundary of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, perhaps because of Felix's ability to express himself, perhaps because we spoke in English, this conversation was pivotal to the research for several reasons. Felix was able to contextualize a hunting trip in 1991 as part of a long tradition of experiences that create stories to be told in the community—stories that celebrate Chipewyan connections to the land. Part of the reason for going to the Thelon Game Sanctuary in 1991 was to hunt along the way, but another essential offshoot of the outing was the stories the hunters would bring back that would feed the people in town, young and old, who would want to know what happened on the land. And even more important, Felix was able to help me see that to him the Creator is equal to understanding and rationality. The land is the work of the Creator on earth, and as such, for Chipewyan people, it is a living connection to Him. What Felix allowed me to see was that land as such is much more than a connection to an abstract deity, it is the Chipewyan link to understanding. Felix allowed me to see that breaking Chipewyan connections to land would be tantamount to severing the tie to a whole system of understanding. We spoke in English:

> To start off with, what your question is all about, I will say that the land, as we see it, the land is very important to us. When we travel like this, we always think about our elders and when they were telling us that the land gives us everything. And we always have that connection with the Creator, with the one that made the land. Even if we're travelling like this, we don't really acknowledge our Creator, maybe amongst ourselves, in normal conversation. But nevertheless the land that we've travelled over from Lutsel K'e, there is a lot of areas that are very important to us, not only in terms of caribou that gives us food, but also in terms of how the land is important to us in terms of our spirituality, how we keep ourselves together in connection with our Creator. We always try to be able to give some form of payment, either in tobacco or in whatever people are using, maybe snuff, chewing tobacco, cigarettes, matches. And you know we just acknowledge (the Creator) and give thanks for a safe journey and also that we don't really get into too much trouble. Also in terms of paying respect to that particular area. Because the land is always powerful. If you don't really watch it, you know it can ... it can take your life away. So we always try to give it respect so that we can give and take life as it is. There's a lot of elders who keep telling us this information. Keep telling us all this. It takes a while for even myself, as a person, to really understand all this. It took me more than one or two trips. It took me coming out more often, then it started to make sense. That connection started being really meaningful. It's really different than just going out on the land for the sake of going out. It's more than that to me now. It creates a balance in myself. Somehow the elders, what they're saying sometimes, I don't really believe them. And it's true that that's the way it is when you're young. Only after a while does it begin to make sense, that the faith is starting to make sense. So now every time the elders speak to me, I really listen, to more than just the sound of the voice. I listen to what they're saying, what the meaning of their words are. And they seem to know too that if you're listening or not, or if you're open to information. They seem to know that. And if you are, they'll give out more information. If you're not, then they'll just give out a certain amount and then just patiently wait for you to open up to receive those information. And they seem to know that. Because we have always had in our culture to pass on this information by word of mouth, so that is one of the ways that we respect the land, is through, we try to treat the land good. Garbage and all the impurities, it has its place. A lot of times we have been influenced by all these outside forces, so sometimes we forget about all these things that the elders have been teaching us.
>
> Just recently, I think even from the younger days of our community, we have had a really hard time with alcohol, drugs. It really hit us hard. It made us forget our way of life, our language. I suppose we really didn't lose it, we just put it aside, you know and really emphasised the forces that was not our way of life. Now we're

coming back to it. We've put the alcohol aside, and it seems that the culture is surfacing naturally. And so that's where we are right now. We're in that direction. So everything seems important to us that is related to the land. I'm quite sure that other people, as they speak to you, might say different words, but we always meet, always together. And we always come to an agreement, come to a consensus about land. And one thing about land is that it is not for sale. It is not for us to be able to determine the changing or the alteration of any shape of it. That is why we are not necessarily against development as such, but I think it has to do with the decision that is made about land, it has to do with the people. So the people are involved any time there is a decision to made about land. So that's where we are. That's how we always were. And it's really showing right now. Right now we're out here on the Barren Lands. When we decide to do something, when the decision is going to be made about what we are going to do on the land, it is always done with people's acknowledgement, like everybody together. And then people go out. As long as people are told to be careful, that's the main thing. You know James, there's a lot of stories, a lot of information people have. And you ask me one question, I suppose ... myself, even that question that you asked, it made me think a little bit. It made me think about things for myself too. It's very important for me to record our elders and document the information. It just seems that that's the only way that we're going to be able to put the information and the message across, of who we really are.

A lot of people know us as Indians. A lot of people know us as northern people. Like ourselves, we call ourselves "Dene Soulthina" means people, the real people, the people that were here. That's why a lot of people refer to us as first nations.

We always believe that we've got to share and we've got to be able to accept other people coming into our land. And that's how we've always been and that's how we're always going to be, I think. That's the way—even in terms of our relationships with other people—we've always got to be able to be good to others, and try to be able to treat others as we treat ourselves. And I think that is the teaching of our relation with the land. It goes likewise for the people too. So there is a lot of teaching through the land, a lot of information. We can live it like that. I think we always want to be able to have a good time on this land here.

And you can see it from the trail going back. Even for yourself. You can see all the trees that was cut, all the wood that was cut for fire and camping areas. It's not like devastating the whole area. It's whatever we need at the time. We give thanks for that and that tree was provided by the Creator, so we acknowledge the Creator again through giving us that wood for heat and for cooking our food. We just take what we need and that's it. And we give thanks in that way when we pay the land back. We say thank you, thank you very much. And then we continue life like that. I think those elders are very important to us like that, really tell us all that information. We have a lot of respect for the elders. That the way life goes like on our land.

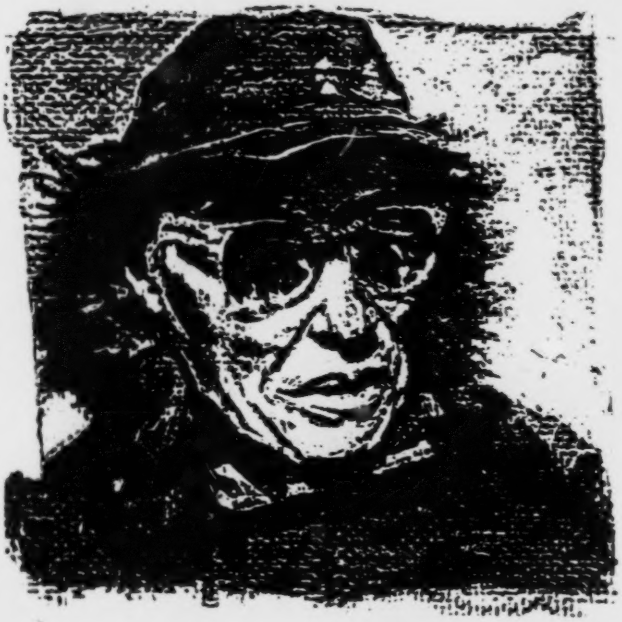
We call this area "the edge." You know it's a little different from where we are in Lutsel K'e. We call it the edge. We say "gay-bon" which basically means the edge that distinctively separates the trees from the non-tree area, the barrenlands. It's a special place for us in terms of the the peacefulness and the fact that there is not many people in this area. And so the land is as natural as possible. Even in our community there has been a lot of bulldozers going around there, a lot of snowmobiles around there, plane traffic, and already there is a lot of people. You can tell there is a lot of people there back home, and southwards. But this way here, the land is just as it is. It hasn't really been changed in any shape or form. Now we don't get too much place like that in other parts of the country. And you know there's no roads up here, not telephone lines, no telephone poles, although there are some changes that the government has put in place, such as the Water Survey of Canada. They put in water station at the mouth of the Lockhart River there just to determine the flow of the water. They chart if out automatically. A big cable running across the river there. And that's a change that they did by themselves. They really didn't involve us in that decision because—that's the Government of Canada. The federal government is the governing body of this country, so why should they talk to us? They consider every part of Canada their land. And that's the problem here. We think it's our land too, in terms of our using of the land in a special way. I don't think it's looked at like that from the government's point of view. They look at it differently. That's why we always have meetings with them to tell them what we think and what our interpretation of the land is. They don't necessarily look at is as "Yes, we respect your ways." They don't necessarily look at it like that. But we try, through our meetings, to get a good interpretation of the land as we see it.

So that's how basically we look at this area here. Peaceful and quiet and a lot of animals, a lot of resources, like that. The muskoxes the wolves. Foxes, jack rabbits, caribou especially, the odd moose comes around. There's a lot fish in special areas too. Different lakes have different fish in them. And all that information is provided by the elders. And that's how we travel around here. It's a little more than a picnic. It's a very important part of our life. When we get home, we share these kinds of stories with our people, and it really gives our people an uplift because it is also in their blood, traditionally. No matter how much time people spend in the community, there is this traditional information that has always come first. Every time we have a hard time, for any type of decisions, we always seek our elders. Our elders seem to know the situation, because we're all people. We're all people on this earth. And as long as we are people we have a really special relationship with the Creator. The one that made us all didn't just make the land. He also made us so that we can be keepers of the land, or take care of the land in some special way. That's what we're doing here. A lot of people are aware of that. Not many people can get out as often as we can, so we pass on and exchange this kind of information. So it's nice like that. It's really important. Life continues. Yeah, it continues on, very much. People are coming out in the summer time too by aircraft. And so maybe the women and children back home right now, maybe they are aware of the men—like they've been out here before. So it's very important. When we come back there we share the meat and share the stories. That's really strong.

The elders say that our Creator is an understanding, an understanding element, an understanding force that guides us. We're able to interpret that in our way, then we give thanks for that. The Creator, he understands everything. Even by ourselves we can't do anything. No matter what we do. We always have a strong spiritual sense about that. A little different from any type of man type ... there's a lot of different religions on this earth. I really identify with the land. Anything to do, in connection with land is a strong acknowledgement of the Creator and what's good for me. A lot of people feel like that too.

It is the spiritual reality of land that keeps us together, and that kept the people of Wounded Knee together, that kept the people at Oka together. They gave up their arms, gave up their guns—in other words, the decision that was made in relationship to, again, the spiritual part of our life, and that is that we don't necessarily believe in war. We always believed in peaceful settlement. And again, that is what is happening here in relationship to land. We're not in a position where we can make any type of weapons or any type of war-making equipment because we don't have the technology, so we'll never go anywhere in that respect. But what we will do is more powerful than all those weapons and that is the peaceful coexistence of ourselves and the land. That's more powerful than all of the equipment that has been used by certain people to gain control, monopoly, on any part of the country. In the end I think the power of the Creator is much greater. So that's what we believe in. That's the way we always maintain our direction. That's the way all the people supported each other in the Oka crisis. People that weren't there were aware of what was going through that spirituality connection to the land. And that's the way we always maintain our position. And so it's a strong force. A lot of our elders who are not able to come here, they are aware of us being here. And it reminds them—they talk about that kind of life right in their homes, reminiscing about the past. It's very important that we get into that. There's a lot more to all this relationship with the land. And if you weren't here and I told you about these things, it would be like you—and I can identify with myself when I was younger. I can understand all that—it takes a while, it takes a while for this type of teaching to really sink home because it's different from the classroom setting, different from any kind of teachings that I have ever know. This is a very special type of teaching for me. It's very practical and very useful because I learn. I learn at my own pace. And I better know my lessons very well out here, because I can't afford too much mistakes. All the ways of ourselves, people travelling, it's all here. Things are happening here, and it's very good.

Noel Drybone



The elder who promised to hold the most valuable information with respect to the Thelon Game Sanctuary was the last of the Chipewyans living on the Barrens. His name—Noel Drybone. I had heard of Noel through a variety of people who had either travelled or worked around the Fort Reliance, Lutsel K'e area and it became clear that he was a person who *had* to be consulted on this project. A *News North* article (March 16, 1977: 9) has him working as an active trapper living on the land around the foot of Artillery Lake. I was very pleased to be able to meet Noel and eventually to get the opportunity to travel with him on several occasions. Although we spoke only once on tape, his contribution to this research is substantial. In many ways, Noel has become a symbol, an embodiment, of the life and attitudes and ways described by Lutsel K'e elders. When we spoke in Archie's office in the band administrative centre, Noel told me that he was born just west of Timber Bay on Artillery Lake. He produced a federal proof of age card that listed his birthdate as December 8, 1926, making him—on paper at least—65 years old when we spoke. But he told me that life at the time he was born was tough; his family was walking mostly at the time, and to be registered one had to get to Fort Resolution. He reckoned that the date on his age card was the date his mother registered him in the official records in Fort Resolution—about two years after he was born. As I learned during

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this conversation, Noel had lived on the barrenlands all his life, trapping fox and hunting wolves. He knew the area like no other person I spoke to. In fact, Chief Antoine Michel made it clear when we talked about the prospect of taking a snowmobile trip from Lutsel K'e to the Thelon Game Sanctuary that they would need Noel to guide the trip. This was an important connection for this research.

Noel spoke in stories, in the tradition of an elder/teacher. He was one of several people who spoke of surprise when he learned that hunting and trapping were prohibited in the Thelon Game Sanctuary, especially because he lived almost on the west border of the Sanctuary as declared in 1927. Although I probably learned as much by hunting and travelling with Noel, his interview words were significant as well. Interpreter Archie Catholique was on the phone through most of this interview, so much of what Noel had to say was said in English:

> I am going down now. I am getting pretty slow. I'm getting old, but I'm okay. I can maybe put in another five years or so on the barrens. When you go out like that on the land, when you go around, it sort of teaches you. It sort of teaches you how to be able to live, to live off the land. It teaches you how it is going to be done. With caribou or muskox, you have to live off that in order to survive.
>
> There is one story I have. When I was young, my dad told me you should—that was in Artillery Lake at the mouth where the caribou are crossing. That's where we were staying at that time. My dad told me I should not go far, but that I should go out there and set some traps. So my brother gave me three traps and my cousin have me two traps too. So I had five traps in all. And I had two dogs. So I went out to that beaver hill, you know that beaver hill I was telling about (on the east shore of Artillery Lake) that beaver hill dam. I went out that way and set some traps. Anyway, when I set those traps around that area, those five traps. After I set the traps I went back over there. Just when I was visiting my last trap, I guess at that time there was—what do you call it—that Sanctuary, for muskox, that game Sanctuary. It was there at that time, but later on they moved it further. At that time it was there. But at that time, I didn't know nothing about that.
>
> I was just visiting my trap. And there was one fox there, and I was just taking it out of the trap, and then my dogs started to bark. I looked up and saw these two people. They've got stripes on them. They walked up to me, and talked to me in English. I didn't know English at that time. I didn't know what they were saying.

He had an interpreter. And the interpreter told me that you're not supposed to trap in that area because it's now a game Sanctuary, in that area. You're not supposed to trap. I didn't know that. I wasn't going to trap a long ways or anything, just close by (my home). That's what I was doing. They never said nothing. They just took off like that and went to where the people were camped.

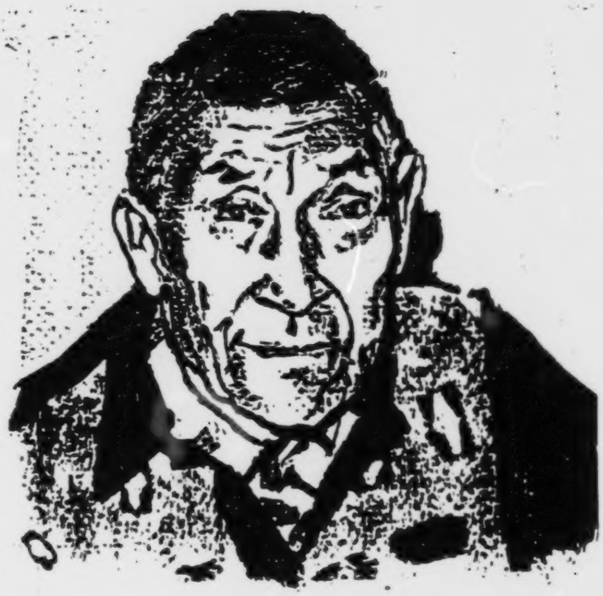
So one day, one year again, I had two dogs again. I was still using two dogs. One of my cousins asked me if I wanted to go down to Fort Reliance. I said okay. We could go down there. Sometimes the cops that are stationed down there, sometimes they usually give them something, groceries and stuff like that. So we went down there and had some tea. He said, "you guys can sleep here if you want to." So he told them to sleep at the interpreter's house. So I said okay and we went down there. We went down to the interpreter's house. We were going to sleep there. And that interpreter asked if we wanted to go down and see the cops, for a visit. We said okay. So we went down there. When we got there, they started to ask questions. They said that people are not supposed to trap in that area. It's a Sanctuary, and people are not supposed to be in there. And they were asking me questions like "Do you know anybody who traps in that area?" or "Have you seen anybody?" I guess they thought I was just a kid, thought I was stupid or something, so they asked these kind of questions. I can remember for a long time when somebody asks a question like that. I can remember for quite a long time. All through my travels I can remember. So if people ask me, if they want to know about my culture, about these ways of living, we tell stories like that. All the names, names of the lakes, or those ridges I was telling about, those mountains, they've all got a story behind it.

You can't seem to go away from that land for long. I was born there. I lived off the land. I made a lot of money by trapping, by killing wolves. When I go to Yellowknife to visit my wife, I don't stay long because I get homesick. My mother and father have a grave there, right at the mouth of the Lockhart River, and for them—it's like they're alive yet today. For them, they're still there. For me it's like that. I don't go away from there very much. I always go back, and I do what I have to do. I was born into it. I get kind of lonely when I go away for so long. I always want to go back there again. One year, I went out trapping around the Yellowknife area. I didn't get much. I didn't do very good. I went back to my own place. In one month, I got what I wanted, what I would be able to buy with. I have things there on the land. Whatever I want is on the land. It's hard for me to let go of it, to let go of whatever has been put there for me on this land here. I would be like that for you too if you were like that, the same thing for you.

When I travel, I know the look for the land. You look at the land. You look at the rocks. You look at drifts, the snowdrifts. You look at that. If I tell you a story about it, then you probably would know. You, if you walk around there, you would go three or four miles and that's it. You couldn't go farther than that. Here you can see very good here, on the map. You can see very good. You can see where the rivers are, where the lakes are, and you could travel any way you want, here (on the map). But once we go there, once we hit the lake (Noel chuckles), when we go there, you won't see nothing like this. Everything will be covered, and you won't know where you're at (Archie and Noel are both laughing). It's pretty hard sometimes.

When I was a young man, I used dogs. And I get lost, but two times. And one time, it was all right. The first one. And after that it's cold, no fires, no eat, no water, no food, nothing. Well I have just a little piece, about that long (showing with his hands a piece of trail about a foot long), and I take one step on the toboggan trail, that's why I find it. And I make it home. All the snow drift you know, and cover everything. And then I find one little spot there. And that's why I got back there. When I was lost there, I found one of my markings, one of my stone marks, then I knew where I was, and that was how I made it back. It was just like I see my trail. I knew my trail. The first time I see a trail, but I don't know which way it go, that way or that way or back. I don't know. And then we stand around about an hour. It was cold. I hold in my leader (dog). I tied him a rope, my leader and I hold that one. I had five dogs at that time. And then I look around with the dog, oh maybe four hundred feet across that way. And then I know one rock, and that we passed it. That was where I made a tent down there. It's pretty hard in the Barren Lands when you get lost. Once you get lost, you go straight and it's not too bad, that one. When you pass there, you see your trail, but still you're not too sure that's you. I don't know. It's pretty hard. That's why I got lost that time when I was about eighteen years old [early 1940s]. I was walking about two nights and one day. There was a big wind, that was why. In the summer time, it's not too bad. In the summer time, it is easy. But in the winter, it is hard. You get lost. It's better to have a guide with you all the time, someone who knows the area. You've got to have a good leader.

Morris Lockhart



Eighty-one year old Morris Lockhart, former chief Felix Lockhart's father, on hearing from Archie Catholique what it was that I was trying to find out, decided to divide his remarks into two sections. He said "I'll start with the story of my dad first, and then I'll tell you my story later on." Both he and his father had spent time in and around the Thelon River. At the outset of the interview, I asked Archie how Morris spelled his name, to which Archie replied "It doesn't matter. He doesn't know how to write anyways." For a man of such apparent poise and dignity, at 81, somehow that surprised me.

Morris was old enough to remember hunting muskoxen for their hides—the practice, encouraged by the Hudson's Bay Company, that resulted in large scale depletion of the muskox population across the barrenlands. This made him a convincing consultant to the project. But what I valued most in Morris's conversation was the way in which he described the passage of land knowledge from generation to generation, and the importance of stories, place names and guided experience in this transfer. When, at the end of the interview, he came right out and said, "I'm in love with the land," I had a powerful sense from the man, what he said and the way that he said it that he was talking about a very strong connection between the man and his homeland. We spoke in his home:

This story is of my Dad's time, around 1880. My Dad used to travel around with the chiefs in those days. I was only thirteen years old at that time. We were with the chiefs at that time. There used to be a store there at that time, right at the mouth of the Lockhart River. The first time there was a store at Fort Resolution. But then there was a store at the mouth of the Lockhart River. There used to be a lot of Chipewyan people there at that time. With the Chiefs and my dad, we started to walk toward Artillery Lake. Just walking. The first time we took off was in May. At that time we were walking. We had a boat. There was still ice on the lake at that time. We were walking around at that time. What we went there for was to stay all summer. We would hunt muskox and caribou and so on. That's how we used to travel around. There was always one chief there and he was always the boss. You always respected him. He would tell everyone what to do. We would stay there all summer. In August, then we started to head back home. We would have a small boat, and that would help us head back home. People at that time, back home, are starting to worry about us because we were gone so long. There were some white people there too. So they started to go out to look for us. They went out and followed our tracks up to Clinton-Colden Lake. They have some food and grub like that stashed, so they knew were still up ahead. When they both travelled back there, we found that grub stashed there. All that grub there is tobacco and stuff like that that we used. That small boat we were carrying was just used to cross lakes, to go across the channels. We would ferry people across in many trips, in one boat. It takes a long time to walk all the way back from up here. When we started heading back, it was really nice. We hit the end of Macleod Bay, we walk a little further and we were home. We made it to the side of the river and then used the boat to get to the other side.

There is one big hill on this side of the Barren Lands, where my dad and us went with the chief. It was called Muskox Hill. It was a big hill. You could see it. The hides for muskox, we take all that. We fix it up and tan it. We use the meat too, for eat, to make dry meat, and stuff like that.

In those days when we were calling lakes by our own names, like Chipewyan names. I still today, I still know all the names for the lakes, the Chipewyan names. A long time ago, the people who live around there, go almost everywhere. They do a lot of hunting and stuff like that. Every lake, they know all the names, the Chipewyan names. This one is called "At-taw-quay" means where caribou swim across the lake. The whole lake is called that. This is "Cus-pa-quay." It means ptarmigan lake. That where they all lay their eggs. The feeding ground is pretty good there. That's why they lay their eggs there. This place is called "Thu-ri-taw." That means when the ice is floating. The ice and the caribou is still floating. When they migrate, they go across. Going through the ice. This is "Thy-an-quai-quay" which means sand lake. That place they call Muskox Hill on the maps is a place "where there is mountains." Some of the rocks look just like trees. They are standing up there, just like trees. Only here is like that, with that rough stuff, with the rocks that look like trees. It starts right here, over here, and goes all the way to here [on the map]. It's hard to travel in there. It's a long ways too.

My dad told me stories about where he used to travel. My dad used to travel with his dad too. And my dad used to travel with his dad. So it's travelled all the way down. A long time ago, as I told you, how the chief and his people, how they travelled. They had kids too and they teach them when they go out on the land. When they travel like that, every lake, the fish, the looks of the land, or whatever happened there, or caribou or something, then they named the lake. That's how they teach the kids. We haven't lost that yet. We still carry it on. The reason why we're really close to the land here, is because our grandfathers travelled on it for means of food. They named the lakes and small rivers. They named wherever they go. Even in the east, they started to walk on it. They do this in the summer when they travel. When they get back home in the winter time. Some of the people they travel around quite a bit. In those days there weren't any jobs, so they could travel around wherever they want. When it comes to winter time, they go out through Artillery Lake and Hanbury River to the Thelon.

In those days, they buy the hides for muskox, so that's why they go out there is to get the hides and the meat. About twenty sleighs would travel together, dog team, twenty dog teams. That's how my grandfather used to work like that. In those days there were no tents, no stove. In those days they used to use caribou hide for shelter. They used to carry sticks, small woods to set up the tents. That time when we were travelling in the summer time, like in May, out in the Barren Lands, like I was telling you before, when we were walking, we have dogs too that were with us. Dogs were back packing. They have two sticks tied to their sides with whatever on the back. In the summer time when there is no dry wood, we use small little twigs out of the ground for fire, or sometimes moss. When we go for muskox, we have with us, some fire wood that we pick up on the way. But sticks for tents, we had to carry them, for the caribou tents.

I've been taught very good by my grandfathers. That's why I really like this land. Me too, I have respect for the land. Now they're all gone. They're all passed away, but me I'm still here. I'm still carrying on. I'm still working on the land yet. I'm not finished yet. That's just a little part of what I wanted to tell you. That's my dad's story.

Now I'll tell you my story. I've got a house here in Snowdrift. And also I used to have a house right in the mouth of the Lockhart River. If you go there now, you'll still see some logs, bits of logs around there. And right up in Artillery Lake, now called Timber Bay, there too I have a house. My dad too used to have a house. And here too at this little bay, this little pond here. We used to have a house there too. That's where I go in the fall time. I get back there in the fall. My kids were small at that time. In those days, I go out and trap for white fox, where my dad used to travel around. Also I carry wood with me when I travel, for firewood.

I travel a long ways for white fox. I passed through Hanbury River, Hanbury Lake, all the way to the Thelon River, for white fox. One time that was a really bad time for me up on the Thelon River, was one time when it started to get really warm for me, when I was out for white fox. Then I had no runners. And it's a long way home, like that, with no runners, to get back home like that. When I was down in Thelon, it's like I'm on top of a hill. You could see down, down toward the Thelon River and you could see some trees. But where I was there wasn't much trees, on the south side. I used to even go from Whitefish Lake. I go there with three dog teams. I've got two boys with dog teams. There were three of us. We would camp here, after Christmas. I would go out from there and trap, until it gets warm. I've got a tent there too. There's lots of wood in that area. Because of the way we work on this land here, not only me, there are a lot of people who live on this land here, hunting, fishing, for muskox. The land helps them to survive. That's why I hate to see this land go to waste. That's why I love this land very much. When I was quite young, when my body was still strong, I used to work in the Thelon area. Now I'm settled here in Snowdrift, now that I am old, I don't go far. I might only go as far as Dowd Lake, down here in the south.

In this route here, as I mentioned, this canoe route up through Stark Lake and Reliance and all the way to Artillery Lake, there is one place called "Thun-ket-la." Now it's called Parry Falls. That's the spiritual site. That's where the old lady is. It is really a big thing for us, as Chipewyan people. We use that to get help from her for sickness or sometimes like, even for caribou. Sometimes you go there and you want to know where the caribou are, you ask this old lady if she can help by telling us which side the caribou are on. And she'll tell you because after that you can see smoke going up. Smoke, and it points to where the caribou are. That's why it really means a lot to us. Way more than the big companies—the mine companies, the oil companies, they find oil and mining like that, to them it is a big thing. To us it's not like that. It's more than that. It's more than mining or oil or anything like that. It means a lot to us that spiritual site. It has been there for a long time now. Before even the doctors came, before anybody knows anything about doctors, or before even the whitemen came on this side. People used to go there to get healed of sickness. They would go down there and talk to this old lady. They would cleanse themselves with the water. They would wash themselves. That's how they would get help, like that. I know some places in the south, some lakes where people go, a holy place like that. This is a similar place. A really holy place. It's going to be here forever. That's the way it is set up that. They went there for that, for anybody who wants to get help. It's still there today. That's why in this area here, we are sort of keeping an eye on it, and why we should stop some other people who are trying to take it away from us. We have a lot of things that are involved here, spiritual things. We don't want anybody to take it away from us. There is another spiritual place somewhere on the north side too. I heard a story about it a long time ago. It's the same thing. A spiritual site. This one here sort of went down underground there, but it's still there. This lady here sort of got mad about it, the old lady. Not the old lady, a couple I guess, they didn't like what was happening, so they went down with it into the ground. I'm not sure what happened. The other one too. That spiritual site too has been found by the Chipewyan people. Now, when we have treaty payment, we combine it with a spiritual gathering. We go out there by boat. We go down there right to the mouth of the Lockhart River. Every summer we have a spiritual gathering. From there we fly some people up here to Parry Falls, and then whatever type of help they want, they go up there and pray, or whatever. Just recently, people started to recognize that spiritual place. This summer, there will be a lot of people coming, people from Yellowknife, from Dogrib Nation area, people from Hay River, Fort Smith, Fort Resolution, plus some other people, they will be down there this summer. So there's a lot of people coming in the summer to try to get help from that place for themselves. When we go down there, usually we have treaty payments too. People, they will go down there and they have drum dances, whatever. Some people go up to the spiritual place, as I mentioned. That's in July. You too, if you go down there too, there will be lots of good stories.

I'm over 80 years old now. My grandfather used to have a cabin here. That's where we used to stay. Some people came here later on. They moved here, or they got married off. But me, I've been here in Snowdrift for a long time. I was born here in Snowdrift in 1910. That's where I was born at this lake right here, the lake beside Cook Lake. I used to work on the land a long time ago. Now I can't do that. I'm too old now. My children go out now. My children go out once in a while. I'm married to Zepp's sister. Zepp's father was southern Chipewyan. I was born here myself. My grandfather was born here too. I know how to work on the land. I know quite a few stories because I've been here all the time. I know how people trap and how they hunt and how people live off the land. I'm sort of in love with the land. I don't want anything to go wrong.

James Marlowe and Steve Nitah

It was important to check with younger people from Lutsel K'e, as well as with the elders. An opportunity to do just that came with a connection through a friend in Yellowknife who was teaching at Arctic College in its Native Studies Program. The first connection was with my friend, the teacher, but I was unable to see any of her Lutsel K'e students (there were three in all) before going to Lutsel K'e. As events unfolded, I answered an advertisment in the Lutsel K'e community hall during Spring Carnival offering a used snowmachine for sale. As it turned out, the vendor was James Marlowe (top). I answered the ad and thereby had some interaction with James over the phone between Lutsel K'e (where I was) and Yellowknife (where he was), and so it was a great pleasure to get the chance to meet him and to speak with him in person. Likewise with Steve, who I had seen at the Carnival. We spoke in the

Yellowknife Campus of Arctic College. James told me that he'd been born and raised right in Lutsel K'e. Steve had been born in Yellowknife and raised in Lutsel K'e. In their mid-twenties, neither Steve nor James had been to the Thelon Game Sanctuary but both had spent time on the land closer to home.

I think the most important lesson learned from men of this generation was the way in which the land lives within them—including Thelon lands—in spite of the fact that they have spent on it only a fraction of the time their parents and grandparents lived on the land. They had heard the stories and had somehow gleaned from the experience of growing up in the community that there was an ethic associated with land that was distinctly Chipewyan. What they had to say was an interesting reiteration of what some of their elders had said, but it was also an important cross check and validation of knowledge that had, indeed, been passed along by the elders.

James: I'm not really familiar with the Sanctuary at all, but I hear stories. Right. I have been to many meetings which I have attended. And like also through my job before. I interpret things in regard to the Thelon River. And the way I picture it for myself, I see a Sanctuary that are surrounded by a fence. That's my perspective, I guess. And the way people view it ... I know, since like elders, they see it as a place where nobody's allowed to do anything out there. In the past where people depend on their livelihood on muskox here, and use that. They have been thrown in jail for that, and now they are kind of scared of it. But it's like their traditional Chipewyan land that's being just taken over by people from outside. That's the way I look at it. Actually, I myself haven't been there before, but I hear stories, eh. I have been to meetings. Like I say, I have been to meetings, and I hear all these things. How the Sanctuary people used to hunt muskox and do trapping and get their caribou. It's just land that people depend on for their livelihood. And I guess you heard about it. There's big ... in regard to the political boundary. There's a fight for it, in between the Dene/Metis and the Inuit/Eskimos [over] who's going to get the part. But the way John Parker has recommended the boundary, he gave some land to the Dene/Metis, whereas before we gave up at least 75% of the Sanctuary to the Inuit. Luckily, this arbitrator has allocated more land than was originally agreed to. This will be of benefit, but we could have used all that. Because traditionally, I know this is all Chipewyan land. And now, if we kind of give up half of it to Inuit people.

Steve: I haven't been there, but stories are similar. But unlike James, I haven't been attending the meetings as often as he does. When I hear Thelon River, not Thelon Game Sanctuary—I'm more familiar with the Thelon area, because to me when I hear that name, it's more personal because I was the person who was brought up mostly in the bush until I was 16 years old. I was brought up by two sets of grandparents. My grandparent and my great grandparents. And every time they talk about the days when they used to trap for fox on Barren Lands, and other other animals, they mention Thelon Game Sanctuary as some kind of mystical place where they could always go and know that they will find some game for food and etcetera, for shelter. They could always depend on it when they were hungry out on the Barren Lands where there is no trees or anything like that. So for me it's like a mystical place, a traditional area the Chipewyan people have always depended on. And concerning the line, well it's speaks something to ownership of the land, but if it stays as a Sanctuary, I don't think ownership makes much difference.

James: I think land, when you say that, I don't think it acts—well it could be acting as a teacher—but I think it's just a natural thing. You've got to go out there and survive on your own. You just learn by surviving on the land. It teaches you automatically. It's just a matter of survival. You've got to learn some techniques that you do in order to survive. And when you say land, you've got to go out and survive.

Steve: When you use the word "land," I think you're limiting yourself. It's more like, "What does the environment you're in teach you?" It's the ultimate teacher. There is no room for mistakes. There is no room to go back and start over again. You have to it once and you have to do it right. If you don't do it right, you're either severely hurt or dead. Everything has to be natural. You have to ... a lot of native—aboriginal— people, that's their philosophy, it's natural. You have to live with the environment. You learn everything from the environment. If you go against the environment, like the capitalists and the communists are doing when they extract and destroy the environment in the name of progress, they're doing everything against nature. They're not only destroying the environment, they are destroying ... they are progressing at the expense of their grandchildren and their children, everyone's grandchildren, future generations.

Steve: Everything in this world is a living creature—the plants, all sorts of animals, human beings. The culture of the Indian people of North America has always been that you're not better than anyone else, you're equal. And if you're equal to somebody, you have to show them respect, and they should have respect for you. So if you show respect to a living plant, you show respect to them by offering them gifts. And you show respect, if you're cutting down a tree, you show respect by saying some symbolic thing—which I don't know—it's just total respect, that's all, respect for other living creatures. That's part of the natural way of life. It's like some sort of religion that people believe in. Like the Catholic religion, people fear God, so that they would have a good life. Instead of having rules to follow, that it's acceptable to all of society. And back then, by respecting others and land was a good way to be respectful to society, Indian society.

James: The other thing too is like when you travel on the land, by boat or going to a new country or to land that you haven't been before, you always pay the land for it to be good to you. It's kind of another thing ... when you travel by boat for example, you pay the water before you go out. For paying the water, in return, they take care of you. They make sure it's calm when you travel. It's just like paying somebody to trespass on them and then having respect for them and in return you'll have good luck or they'll respect you. So it's just a matter of taking care of each other. You take care of this person, and this person will take care of you in return. That way we can just live good with each other.

Just one example I'd like to give you. In Snowdrift we have an annual community gathering in Fort Reliance. In 1989 and 1990, I was there. The first year it was held was in 1989, when people went out there, there was no respect. People were just partying and drinking and screaming and staying up late at night, and the first two days were good days, but after that, the whole week it was just pouring and fog and really bad weather. And in 1990, last summer, everybody was told to be aware of this, to pay the land to pay the water when you go out there. And we went out and the whole lake was calm. Everywhere we went, it was calm. And at the meetings, everybody was told to pay the water or pay the land wherever they go. And that whole week was just nice weather. And everybody was doing it. There weren't as many parties, maybe a few people, but still a lot of people did respect the land. The weather was beautiful for the whole week. That's the way it is when you travel and respect the land. I've been travelling in southern Canada, and the United States. Every time we go there, we pay the land, pay the water, or just pay something.

Trevor Teed

I first heard of Trevor Teed in a newspaper article clipped from *The Yellowknifer* on November 5th, 1991, that told the grim story of two men who had gone through the ice near Yellowknife on their snowmachine. One man had died in the water. The other was Trevor Teed, a Metis[36] who had worked extensively with the Dene Nation documenting land use. When I arrived in Lutsel K'e in March, Teed was in town on a rush visit to collect land use documentation of the Thelon Game Sanctuary for the purposes of former NWT commissioner John Parker recommending a line on which to divide Inuit and Indian territory. On Chief Antoine Michel's invitation, I spent time with Trevor as he went about his work in the band council chamber. As a Metis who had spent a great deal of his thirty-odd years on the land and with the Indian people around Great Slave Lake, Trevor knew a great many people and had a wealth of land knowledge. Of course, when I made the connection to the newspaper piece I'd clipped, he told me the chilling story of going through thin ice into 160 feet of water at -30° C and watching his friend Billie die before his eyes. He told me of slipping beneath the water himself, drawn down by the weight of his sodden snowmobile suit—"like six guys pulling on your feet." He told me of being underwater for a long time, of seeing a great white light and a toque floating listlessly below the surface of the water. He recognized the hat as his own and remembered thinking that he didn't want to die by drowning like his father and brother had done, in two separate incidents. He told me of struggling to the surface and gasping for air, and of allowing one arm to freeze to the thin surface of the ice and keeping the other in the water because "I knew I'd need it when the others got there to rescue me." He told me of how the land is a stern teacher. But he also spoke of matters more directly relevant to my research.

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[36] Although Trevor is Metis, it is appropriate that his words be added to this section because of his central involvement in the interviewing, mapping and writing and matters of Chipewyan land use. Teed fits better in this section than in the one reserved for Euro-Canadian comments on the Thelon Game Sanctuary because he is funadmentally an an *insider* with respect to the place

Of particular significance were Teed's comments about what he had learned about Chipewyan approaches to land, especially on spiritual matters and regarding more pragmatic issues, like how elders navigate from Lutsel K'e to the Thelon. It was Teed who put into focus the "where God began" idea and confirmed the spiritual significance of the Thelon area. Comments about his own experiences on the barrens were also instructive in the sense that he presented himself as a person who had been moved by the *feel* of the Barrens. He was a valuable and articulate consultant. We spoke in English:

> Well, basically how people travelled is they travelled by the way of the land for wood—watersheds—and looking at the map. It's a little hard to see how, but the rivers generally in this country flow into The Great Slave Lake from different angles until you reach the Thelon River. Then the whole attitude of the land changes and slants more to the east than to the west. So what people did is they followed the caribou, and the caribou actually followed the lay of the land. The easiest route was to follow the way the land sloped and the way the drainage would flow. So in actual effect you just had people following the valleys and the general contours of the land until they hit the Thelon. Then, from the Thelon, everything changes to the opposite of what it was a couple of miles before that. People knew exactly where they were always. What the land looked like. And the slope, high hills, just general pieces of land that have always been there. For example, you may have a group of young people—now, this may have been a number of years ago—I don't know if it's practiced much today—would come out of a community such as Fort Reliance, and they'd be intent on travelling to the Thelon but they'd never been there before. But they knew exactly the way to go, mostly because of the stories passed down as to how the land lies—certain heights of land, or no heights of land, or sand eskers which generally run east to west or northeast to southwest. They can generally find their direction and their route by that. And then besides that there's—the Dene traditionally marked the route with stone markers. And they've been there for thousands of years, and they're still there today. The markers were sort of like a pyramid, as far as I can

understand. Just a couple of rocks piled up on top of one another. Something similar to the Inukshuk but minus the arms and things such as that.

People learned the lay of the land from their grandparents. In Dene and Metis history, traditionally the grandparents were the main teachers of the youth, and the way they taught the youth was just by talking to them, telling them stories. Today, some of the stories are known as legends, but they would explain how they travelled. Whereas, today we'll sit down and we'll talk about Dubawnt Lake—it's just a name, but in the aboriginal language there's a totally descriptive phrase for that particular lake which would outline the way the lake lies, the way the land looks all around that lake, so at any given time in the rest of those young people's lives when they hit that lake, they'll remember that lake because of the descriptive phrases that were given. The name would be relevant to a way of life, I guess, is the best way to describe it. Like, not necessarily to a way of life but including a way of life and a descriptive phrase of the country surrounding the area. Like, I have some notes on different names like that: there's "Caribou Crossing Lake," "White Sand Lake," "Meeting Place Lake," "Muskox River," "Big Fish River." You know? And everything indicates what's there, or there'd be underneath the water, or be available visually, but generally visually because it was used as a land marker.

I've had the opportunity to interview several people from Yellowknife, Fort Ray, Dogribs, Chipewyans, and Slave People. People from Fort Resolution, Smith, and Snowdrift—and the most common explanation regarding the Thelon is that, when God created the earth, he started at the Thelon. In other words, that's God's country. It's the best land that the Dene have ever had. It was kind of moving because I heard it from one man, then I heard it from another man, and actually I heard it from several men who—and I've heard it from women too—just say it's the best place in the world. "When I die and I go to heaven, I hope heaven's like the Thelon River." Things such as that. The reasoning I've been given is because it's beautiful, for one. Sand dunes running, sloping down; big high timbers; beautifully clear water; moose, caribou, beavers in certain areas (which I found quite amazing.) But, all types of animals. It's like—another terminology I've heard used is "A garden of Eden in the middle of the barren lands." Hearne may have used that term. But, through translation, it's—the best thing I've ever heard it described is as where God began to create the earth. My view is it's one of the most beautiful places I've seen. It's real nice country—it looks like it should be in Jasper or Banff or something, or some natural park in the south with the sand and the well-spaced high trees and clear water—animals. I think it's a beautiful place. But I don't know the land like the Elders know it.

Actually, you're probably one of the few southern Canadians that I've heard make any reference to the land, as a teacher. It's quite common to hear something quite similar to that in the Dene and Metis communities because the land is the teacher. Well, I can speak about this by telling you about my incident of going through the ice in which my friend died. We made a mistake; as humans, we messed with nature and we crossed at the wrong place. It was on Harding Lake. We crossed it. It's a very deep lake and it's a long lake, and we crossed it on a very point on the lake which common sense tells you well, if its a narrows, well the water—there's got to be some water movement there, and likely deep. And if it's deep, it means it's warmer, and it freezes last. If it's narrow it means there's got to be some movement there, so that would help prevent the freezing. We should have stayed more to the shoreline as we had been all day on all the lakes we travelled. For one reason or another, we messed with nature, crossing at the wrong place. You'll never catch me again crossing a lake at the narrows; I don't care if it's in the dead of winter. I've known that for years. So did my partner. It was just something that we seemed to ignore. It was just like we took a chance on an inner dare or something because you never go across a lake at a place like that. And there's several other things I've learned from the land. My experience here wasn't the first I've had in my family. I lost my dad in the water and I've lost a brother in the water. It's generally got a lesson to be taught when somebody dies, or gets hungry for that matter. Or injured. You don't gamble with nature. You take what it has to offer; whether it's meagre or plentiful you take it and you appreciate it. You don't push nature to give you something it's not prepared to give you. Whether that be solid ice to cross on or animals that aren't dinner. My mother phoned me *after* I went through the ice. She said, "That's it! You're never going on the skidoo again. You're never going in the bush again. You're never going to do that again!" And I told her, "Mom, what do you want me to do? Kill myself? I've lived my whole life like this, and it's not like nature reared its ugly head and swatted us down by any means. We messed with nature, and we made a mistake, and I can't hold that against nature for the rest of my life. I'm not going to quit living because I made a mistake." Actually, I was back there six days later on top of the ice, trying to get my partner's body out. And I had no real apprehension of being there; the only apprehension I had was that I realized I could have very well been down there at the same time. It made me appreciate life a little more, and it definitely never ever changed my mind about the lifestyle that I lead because it's the only lifestyle that I know. Some people have car accidents: do they quit driving? Some do, I guess. I was always taught that if you fall off your bicycle or you fall of something, you get back on and keep trying again. I guess I've learned my lesson quite well because, as I say, six days later I was back out there with the skidoo, right on the ice, chopping holes. Right on the same ice, the same spot. But, like I say, it's not going to prevent me from living my life the way I've lived it, I hope.

The message *I* get personally when I go into the barren lands is one of total freedom. I feel as though I'm the only man on earth and I'm going to live forever in that country. That's the—the day is never going to end and I'm going to live forever, and absolutely free. If that's—you know, if you're asking me what my personal feeling is when I hit the barren lands, that's it. It doesn't matter if it's a whiteout, or if it's a rainy day, or it's the most beautiful day in the world. And I wake up in the morning and I feel like I'm going to live forever, and I'm the only guy there. That's a personal feeling, and that's how I feel. I get up—I'm not saying that I feel that I'm the only man in the world—I should terminize that to say that it doesn't *matter* if I'm the only man in the world or not. I've only had this feeling in two other places. I got it the first time I soloed and airplane. I haven't got a license but I've flown planes alone. But that's the only time I think I've had that feeling. Then. And I had a similar feeling watching the birth of my kids. That's probably the only times I have that. Whenever I hit the barren lands, I have the tendency to yell, "Waaa-hoooooooo!!!!!" I just feel great! I don't know what it is. It's just the wide open spaces, the wind in my face, the smell, the sights, the sounds. Sometimes there's nothing to hear and there's nothing to see but white. It's just like it releases my inner soul from my common sense.

Expressions of Place: Euro-Canadian

Written Texts

The Thelon River area was, for a time, in a highly desired location in northern Canada because it—the areas—was thought to hold a short route to the riches of the Orient—a so-called *northwest passage.* But when it became clear that there was no such thing in the mainland NWT, attentions of European explorers were turned elsewhere. Samuel Hearne *heard* about the Thelon area on his journey, but no European actually set foot in the valley until the final moments of the 19th century. As late as 1880, the Thelon is highlighted as one of the "larger unexplored area" of the Dominion (Pike 1892, 276).

The history of the Thelon Game Sanctuary is best considered by Mackinnon (1983) supplemented by Baird's (1949) thorough listing of all Canadian Arctic expeditions from 1000 to 1918, Hodgins et al.'s (1991) compendium of river travellers of the Central Arctic, and less complete but nevertheless useful considerations of Keewatin exploration history by other writers (Birket-Smith 1929; Zozula 1981; and Raffan 1991). From these writings come the historic Euro-Canadian texts of the Thelon.

The first written record of the Thelon was Samuel Hearne's (Hearne 1795), and it has been the most enduring, partly because it was the first in the Euro-Canadian record and partly because he ascribed to the place the name "little commonwealth" which was later interpreted as "Garden of Eden," (Tyrrell 1908) thereby giving the Thelon, from first encounter, a numinous quality. Hearne's record is as follows:

On February 24th [1772], we encountered a strange Northern Indian [Chipewyan] leader called Thlewsanellie who, with his band, joined us from the eastward. ... The people of this family, as it may be called, have for a generation past taken up their abode in some woods which are situated so far out on the barren grounds as to be quite out of the track of other Indians. This place is some hundreds of miles distant both from the main woods and from the sea. Few of the trading Northern Indians have ever visited it, but those who have give a most pleasing description of it. It is situated on the banks of a river which has communications with several fine lakes. As the current sets north-eastward, it empties itself, in all probability, into some part of Hudson's Bay, probably into Baker Lake at the head of Chesterfield Inlet.

The accounts given of this place, and of the manner of life of its inhabitants, would fill a volume. Let it suffice to observe that it is remarkably favourable for every kind of game that the barren ground produces. However, the seasonal continuance of game is somewhat uncertain, which being the case, the few people who compose this little commonwealth are, by long custom and the constant example of their forefathers, possessed of a provident turn of mind, together with a degree of frugality unknown to every other tribe in this country except the Eskimos.

Deer are said to visit their country in astonishing numbers both in spring and autumn. The inhabitants kill and dry as much deer flesh as possible, particularly in the fall, so they are seldom in want of a good winter's stock.

Geese, ducks and swans visit them in great plenty during their migrations, and are caught in considerable numbers in snares. It is also reported (although I doubt the truth of it) that a remarkable species of partridge, as big as English fowls, are found in that part of the country only. These, it is said, as well as common partridges, are killed in great numbers with snares as well as with bows and arrows.

The rivers and lakes near the little forest where the family has fixed its abode, abound with fine fish that are easily caught with hooks and nets. In fact, I have not seen or heard of any part of this country which seems to possess half the advantages requisite for a constant residence, that are ascribed to this little spot.

The descendants of the present inhabitants, however, must in time evacuate it for want of wood, which is of so slow a growth in these regions. What is used in one year, exclusive of what is carried away by Eskimos who resort to this place for lumber, must cost many years to replace.

It may be thought strange that any part of such a happily situated community should be found so far away from their home. Indeed, nothing but necessity could possibly have urged them to undertake a journey of so many hundred miles as they had done. But no situations is without its inconvenience, and their woods containing few, if any, birch trees, they had come so far to procure birch bark for canoes, as well as some of the fungus that grows on the birch tree and is used for tinder.[37]

Hearne's findings, when compiled with the dead ends of his fellow sailors, pretty well established the wishful disposition of the northwest passage through the barrenlands. In the years to come, Franklin, his officers, and those who came looking for them, explored and mapped vast regions of the arctic coast, but always steering north west of the Thelon River area. It was not until the gentlemen adventurers, born of the Victorian era, that Euro-Canadians made actual contact with Thelon lands. While kindred gentlemen of the British upper class rambled in deepest darkest Africa and elsewhere in Europe and Asia, David Hanbury opted to travel to Canada in 1898. The following spring Hanbury made his way to up the coast of Hudson Bay, in Chesterfield Inlet to Baker Lake and up the Thelon River and its western branch to the height of land and on to Great Slave Lake and Edmonton. He remarked in his now classic book, *Sport and Travel in the Northland of Canada* (Hanbury 1904):

> To the natural features of the country it would be difficult for any writer to do justice. They require an artist's pencil rather than the pen of a wanderer. The photographs will give the untravelled reader but a poor idea of the character of the country which for many years has, with scant justice, been called the "Barren Ground." The Northland must be lived in to be understood and appreciated, for its constantly changing aspects baffles description. (v)

His remarks about a second trip—this time from west to east—in 1901 were rather more fulsome. Hanbury's account of paddling from Great Slave Lake to

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[37] I have chosen, for ease in reading, Mowat's 1958 rendering of Hearne's journal (150-153) which is true to the original in meaning and sentence structure but easier to read because he has made the text slightly more amenable to the 20th century ear and has f/s transpositions required of the original Hearne. For readers interested in this passage in Hearne, the page reference is 272-278.

Chesterfield Inlet in two cedar canoes purchased from the Peterborough Canoe Company of Ontario became the precursor and model of all subsequent Thelon trip reports. He also put into print a truism of northern travel of the time with respect to the contribution of Native people to Euro-Canadian exploits in the area.

> I have learned from experience that an expedition to the north has the better chance of success the fewer white men are connected with it. In travelling over the "Barren Ground" one cannot have more suitable companions than the natives of the country. A white man there is in a strange land, and, however willing and able to stand cold, hunger, and fatigue, he is a novice in this experience. The conditions and work are unfamiliar to him, and if he were to meet with a bad accident, or to fall ill, or to lose himself in a fog, his misfortune would probably be the ruin of the expedition. (20)

Unfortunately, Hanbury's attitude toward his native compadres was so condescending as to make any of his few ethnographic renderings suspect at best. He liked the Eskimos and their approach to life on the land—"Huskies" he called them—but of the Indians he was more circumspect. A couple of short examples illustrate this point:

> The Indian is morose, even sullen, rarely smiles, and of late years has acquired a slovenly, swaggering way of going about. When one arrives at his camp and proceeds to pitch his tent, the Indian never offers a helping hand. Pipe in mouth, he stands sullenly looking on, his hands thrust deep in his trousers' pockets. The contempt which he nourishes in his heart for the white man is expressed on his countenance. (41)

> An Englishman generally knows his own mind, and does not waste time coming to an arrangement. It is otherwise, however, with the "poor Indian" who, when any sort of negotiation is in progress, has to keep his friends fully informed, and deliberate with them at great length. Consultations are held with brothers, uncles, aunts, and cousins, and, after much tea-drinking and tobacco-smoking, a promise or bargain of some sort is made. But a bargain does not bind an Indian, if, next morning, he thinks he has not asked enough. He then comes to announce that his wife is ill and he must therefore remain at home, but he hints that, if he were to receive a few dollars more, he might contrive to leave her. When this difficulty is disposed of, he solicits money to pay for some one to look after his wife in his absence, and for some one else to look after his dogs. He wants more money to provide moccasins, pipe and tobacco, and a blanket. In fact, his demands extend to the provision of a complete outfit, and if this were granted he would still be dissatisfied. ... They may be good Christians; I do not know; but notwithstanding the labours of missionaries, they

> are Indians still, and the return for the time, trouble, and money expended on them seemed to me very inadequate. (25-26)

Hanbury arrived in Fort Resolution on his way north on July 7th 1901 and found a large assembly of Dog Rib, Yellow Knife and Slave Indians awaiting the arrival of the Indian Commissioner from whom they had very recently accepted treaty. Hanbury, for the life of him, could not understand what advantage there might be for the Government when it was aware of the chance being so slim of any white person ever settling the region.

Going this way, Hanbury's first glimpse of the barrengrounds was at the Artillery Lake end of Pike's Portage, where he was struck by the beauty of the place.

> Artillery Lake looked very picturesque in the bright sunlight; the water, which was of a beautiful blue, was fanned into ripples by the gentle summer breeze. The "Barren Ground" lay on either side beautifully green and decked gay with a variety of wild flowers. Its charm, and the sense of freedom which it gives, are very impressive, but cannot be described. (30)

On August 5th, Hanbury was only a short distance from the confluence of the western branch (now called the Hanbury River) and the Thelon. It was here that he released the Indians in his employ to return to Great Slave Lake for payment. It was at that point in the book that he pondered the matter of naming.

> On old maps it is called the Thelewwdezzeth, but this Indian name seems dropping out of use, and the Indians now call it the Thelon. The main part of the river is not visited by Indians, and only Yellow Knives from Great Slave Lake occasionally visit the upper waters of its western branch. The Eskimo, on the other hand, frequent and always have frequented the lower waters of the main river, and among them it is knows as the Ark-i-linik, which in their language means the Wooded River. Considering the great advantage of using local names which are not merely known to the natives but are descriptive of natural features of the country, I have no hesitation in adhering to the existing name of Ark-i-linik. The Canadian Geographical Board, however, have thought fit to take exception to the Eskimo name, and I do not know at present what name they have decided to adopt. Mr. Tyrrell, who visited the river in the summer of 1900, informs me that he has named its western branch after me—an honour for which I thank him, but for which I was not at all anxious. (36)

Hanbury does not dwell on the physical characteristics of the Thelon. He is an honest and seemingly reliable observer, but clearly his role in returning to the river, *and* in going there in the first place was for discovery and adventure. His opening remark is a telling one. "The book deals with sport and travel," he writes, "no attempt having been made to accomplish elaborate geographical or other scientific work." Even at that, however, he could not resist calling J.W. Tyrrell to task for stretching a point with regard to the available timber in the area. Hanbury writes:

> Mr. J.W. Tyrrell, of the Canadian Survey Department, and his party descended the main river in the summer of 1900, the purpose in view being, as I was told, the construction of a railway through this region to the Hudson Bay. ... Mr. Tyrrell, I find, on his way out, gave his interviewers an exaggerated estimate of the timber of the river. His description was, however, probably amplified by the over-fertile imaginations of those who questioned him, and I am sure that he will not mind these remarks. The woods as a whole amount only to a rather deep fringe, the trees for the most part being scattered and not continuous. Here and there along the banks are spots and short stretches quite bare of timber. After a short walk away from the river on either side one reaches the outer edge of the woodland fringe beyond which the land is typical prairie. ... Should gold or other precious metal ever be discovered in these regions—and who can tell?—this timber would be of economic value. (37- 39)

An interesting final note regarding Hanbury's perceptions of the Thelon has to do with who was using it at the time. Chipewyans guided him from the west to the Thelon River and he had encountered and been guided by Inuit from the east on his 1899 expedition. Despite this, he reckoned that, "on the main Ark-i-linik River there is a stretch of country about eighty miles in length into which no human enters. The Eskimo do not hunt so far west, and the Yellow Knives and Dog Ribs from Slave Lake do not go so far east" (13).[38]

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[38] This contention contravenes work that has been done since by Dene land use mapper Trevor Teed who established historic use through place names and oral history accounts that puts Dene people well past a point eighty miles from the Hanbury Thelon confluence. It is also interesting to note that two decades later, Birket- Smith (1929), in a

Although Hanbury is the person credited with "finding" the Thelon River, he was not the first Euro-Canadian to paddle its lower reaches. While mapping Northern for the the Geological Survey of Canada in 1892, geologist Joseph Burr Tyrrell was informed by Indians at Black Lake that there was an old Indian route to the Barrens. The following year, he and his younger brother, James W. Tyrrell, set out from Lake Athabasca, went up the Chipman River to Selwyn Lake, over the divide into Wholdaia lake, down the Dubawnt River to Baker Lake, entered Chesterfield Inlet, and from there down the coast of Hudson Bay to Churchill. In spite of thinking that they were on the Dubawnt River all the way to Baker Lake, the Tyrrells did notice a large amount of driftwood in the river as they entered the outflow of Beverly Lake and surmised that they must be close to the confluence of some other river flowing in from wooded country to the west. J.W. Tyrrell's book details his feelings on reaching a lake in lands just east of the Sanctuary:

> It was a lovely calm evening when the track of our canoes first rippled the waters of this [Aberdeen] lake, and as we landed at a buff point on the north shore and from it gazed to the eastward over the solitary but beautiful scene, a feel of awe crept over us. We were undoubtedly the first white men who had ever viewed it, and in the knowledge of this fact there was inspiration. (J.W. Tyrrell 1908: 101)

J.B. Tyrrell's account of the barren landscape was more technical:

> The "Barren Lands" often closely resemble the great plains west of Manitoba along the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, being undulating, grass- covered country, underlain by Till more or less thickly studded with boulders; but a hard granite knoll projecting here and there serves to remind one that the Till is not here resting on soft cretaceous shales and sandstones, and at once accounts for the much greater abundance of boulders. (J.B. Tyrrell 1894: 395)

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footnote, calls Hanbury short on his name for the Thelon River. We writes, "Hanbury's Ark-i-linik is ... [a] pseudo-Eskimo name for the river. ... The word means 'that on the other side of something' and is used of the ridges on the south side of the Thelon River, the camp being pitched on the north side, but, according to Eskimo usage, cannot be used for the river itself." (30)

Around the turn of the 20th century, several white hunters and sportsmen of means travelled into the Northwest Territories. Hobbs (1985) includes the Tyrrells in this category along with characters like Ernest Thompson Seton, Warburton Pike, Frank Russell, Henry Toke Munn, Caspar Whitney, Harry Radford, and Thomas Street. Hobbs argues that Pike's 1889 journey to land north of Artillery Lake was significant because it marked the end of a long period of waning European interest in the North and "the emergence of a new breed of northern explorers, whose delight in exploring the Barrens for their own sake set them distinctly apart" (Hobbs 1985: 57). While only Hanbury and the Tyrrells actually entered the Thelon watershed, there are lessons in their writing about the lure of the barrens.[39] But before considering that aspect of the story, it is worth mentioning in passing Hobbs' formidable characterization of the barrenlands. She writes:

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[39] In at least footnote format, I must mention in passing the expedition of Northwest Mounted Police Inspector Ephrem Albert Pelletier who, in 1908, was the first policeman to patrol from Great Slave Lake to Chesterfield Inlet. Although beyond Hanbury and the Tyrrells, Pelletier has little to add in terms of his own perceptions of the Thelon, Jennings' (1985) writing about [illegible] Pelletier expedition adds valuable context to the Thelon story. The white fox boom was yet to happen in the area, but for the first time in its history, Euro-Canadians were paying serious attention to the lands between Great Slave Lake and Hudson Bay. The police presence is a mark of that. Two other police patrols, one in 1917 led by NWMP Inspector French who travelled from Baker Lake up the Thelon and over to Bathurst Inlet to find out what happened to American naturalists Radford and Street, and one in 1929 led by RCMP Inspector Charles Trundle who confirmed the deaths reported by Dewar's party the year before and buried the bodies of Hornby, Christian and Adlard. Neither of these reports has a level of detail sufficient for making any judgement about how the men perceived the land in general or the Thelon in particular. By the 1930s, Mackinnon (1983) reports that the main work of the police in the western Barrens was to check on the use of poison and the occasional murder or suicide among remote white trappers. Apparently the trappers appreciated the medical and postal services of the mounties and that mutual good feeling is evident in a poem "The East Patrol" written by police Corporal R.W. Thompson in 1936. Clearly, the focus of the police was on people, and not on land, or people's perceptions of land.

> [After the 1850s] there were no major expeditions through the Barren Lands for the next three decades. And no wonder. Characterized by long cruel winters, raging blizzards and the ever present threat of starvation, the area to this day does not easily inspire confidence. In summer, for a brief time, the sun shines 24 hours a day, the snow and ice recede, ... But summer is both short and deceiving in the Barrens. In mid-season the ground remains frozen, winds howl furiously, mosquitoes and blackflies attack in armies and survival is still threatened by famine and exposure (Hobbs 1985: 57).

Two snippets from Pike catch his distaste for Indians and his romantic view of the enterprise of northern travel:

> From every point of view, then, the Indian of Great Slave Lake is not a pleasant companion, nor a man to be relied upon in case of emergency. Nobody has yet discovered the right way to manage him. His mind runs on different principles from that of a white man, and till the science of thought reading is much more fully developed, the working of his brain will always be a mystery to the fur-trader and traveller (Pike 1892: 122).

> On looking back, one remembers only the good times, when meat was plentiful and a huge fire lit up the snow on the spruce trees. Misery and starvation are forgotten as soon as they are over, and even now, in the midst of the luxury of civilization, at times I have a longing to pitch my lodge once more at the edge of the Barren Ground, to see the musk-ox standing on the snowdrift and the fat caribou falling to the crack of the rifle, to hear the ptarmigan crowing among the little pines as the sun goes down over a frozen lake and the glory of an Arctic night commences (Pike 1892: 276).

Seton's motivations and general perspective are revealed in this excerpt:

> For the uncivilized Indian still roams the far reaches of absolutely unchanged, unbroken forest and prairie leagues, and has knowledge of white men only in bartering furs at the scattered trading posts, where locomotive and telegraph are unknown; still the wild buffalo elude the hunter, fight the wolves, wallow, wander, and breed; and still there is hoofed game by the million to be found where the Saxon is a seldom seen as on the Missouri in the times of Lewis and Clarke. *Only* we must seek it all, not in the West, but in the far North-west; and for "Missouri and Mississippi" read "Peace and Mackenzie Rivers," these noble streams that northward roll their mile-wide turbid floods a thousand leagues to the silent Arctic sea. This was the thought which spurred me to a six months' journey by canoe. and I found what I went in search of, but found, also, abundant and better rewards that were not in mind, even as Saul, the son of Kish, went seeking asses and found for himself a crown and a great kingdom. (Seton 1908: xv-xvi)

Without question, the most notorious and celebrated of white "gentleman" adventurers was the Englishman John Hornby who had two illustrious and extended journeys into the Thelon area, the latter of which claimed his life and the lives of two companions. Called everything from a hero and "the precursor of the modern hippies" (Mackinnon 1983), to "the oddest of the eccentric wanderers" (Mowat 1973: 348) and "victim of the explorer's mystique" (Clarke, 1982), Hornby came to Canada in 1904 when he was 23 years old. Except for returning to Europe to serve as sniper in the First World War (during which he was wounded, and after which, some writers argue, he was never the same), Hornby spent the next 23 years living and travelling in the North. After some years in the vicinity of Great Bear Lake and beyond, he moved east to Fort Reliance, at the east end of Great Slave Lake, where he secured his reputation as an eccentric, solitary soul. At that time he was hired by another adventurer, James Critchell-Bullock, to conduct a quasi-scientific expedition to the Thelon River (Waldron and Critchell-Bullock 1931), after which Hornby reported to officials of the federal government:

> The results of this trip show that there is a large uninhabited area where musk-ox are plentiful, swans and geese nest, and caribou have their young undisturbed by man. This area possess no minerals, containing only sandstone and sand, consequently can afford no inducement or excuse for men to go on a prospecting trip. If it is desired to protect the game in this part of the country it is essential to take measures to prevent traders from encouraging natives to hunt in this district. A few years, perhaps, and it will be too late.[40]

It was on the strength of these comments by Hornby, set beside the germinating federal conservation ethic in Ottawa, that the federal government took steps to establish the Thelon Game Sanctuary. In the meantime, Hornby had gone back to England, recruited his 18-year- old nephew, Edgar Christian, to join him for a grand Thelon Adventure, returned to Canada, recruited another expeditionary, 27-year-old ex-Royal Air Force pilot, Harold Adlard, and, in the summer of 1926, set out to spend the winter in the Thelon River valley. Ironically, in the spring of 1927, just as the federal government was getting ready to pass the order in council to establish the Thelon Game Sanctuary, Hornby, Christian and Adlard all died of starvation on the banks of the Thelon.

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[40] Hornby, as quoted in Whalley (1962).

Hornby himself had plans to write a book about his barrenland experiences entitled *The Land of Feast or Famine*,[41] but he was not a writer or journal keeper. The story eventually got out when the diary of Edgar Christian was found and published (Christian 1937). It is a tale of human endurance and suffering that has been told and retold many times since.

There was very little in Christian's diary to suggest anything other than the fact that these men were drawn to this land by its emptiness and by the possibilities for adventure that it held.[42] As to their perceptions of the land, it was forbidding and hostile to them when they set out and became increasingly more so as the days and weeks wore on. However, in the more than sixty years that have passed, several writers have attempted to gain some sense of what this land meant to Hornby and the others and how, in the end, they came to relate to it: Edgar Christian's diary (Christian 1937); a magazine account by a post-graduate student from McGill University who was with the prospecting party that found the bodies in 1928 (Dewar 1978); the report of the N.W.M.P. party who went in and buried the Hornby party (Trundle 1929); a dramatic play about the event (Valpy 1983); a novel—*Snowman*—by Thomas York (York 1976) which features Hornby as a main character, and a second novel—*The Musk Ox Passion*—also by Thomas York (York 1978), which explores madness and the barrenlands; a detailed historical biography of Hornby by Queen's University scholar George Whalley entitled *The Legend of John Hornby* (Whalley 1962); a sheaf of correspondence between Thomas Hornby Hill—a great nephew of Hornby's—and canoe outfitter Alex Hall about the importance and possibility of visiting the place where his famous uncle died; and the accounts of a team of adventurers who wintered in the Sanctuary in 1978 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Hornby's death (Common 1978; Norment 1989).

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[41] The 1929 report of the police party who buried the Hornby group (Trundle 1929) details finding a large notebook in a leather suitcase in the cabin with the beginnings of a story called *In the Land of Feast or Famine* or *A Life in the Arctic Region* by J. Hornby. A preface and part of one chapter was all that they found. The material was sent to area administrator O.S. Finnie.

[42] Some have suggested that Hornby was interested in cashing in on the booming white fox trade in the area, but it is not at all clear that he took enough traps, or had the interest, to follow this through.

The most interesting and insightful of these are the works of fiction.

Valpy's play depicts purgatory where characters who knew Hornby talk about who he was and what, and scenes from the cabin itself taking the audience into the miserable winter of 1926/27. As Edgar tends his Uncle in the last throes of his life, Valpy is able to bring to life his insight that Hornby saw no spiritual forces in the land. Edgar says, "Let me pray for you. What harm can it do?" Hornby replies:

> What can do no harm can do no good. The power of life is in *you* lad. God is a creation of civilized men. There's no mercy to be found in the barrens. You've learned that by now. You are God here. You alone decide whether you live or die. I know this Edgar. I've been to the edge and looked over more than once. Life is sacred above everything. I'll live through you. Do you see that? How I need you? (44-45)

And in *Snowman*, the novel by Thomas York, there are some interesting insights about *hereness* and *thereness* and the propensity of Euro-Canadian to define where they are relative to where they were, to home. The character who is Christian's analogue in the novel is left alone by Hornby and the third man. It's November. For months he has been with the stunted trees around the cabin and beyond that, nothing. Finally, he comes to the reality of the space in which they have locked themselves, the barrens. He writes in his journal:

> Walked out on the barrens today, not a sound and nothing in sight. No wonder the Eskimo shamen had no trouble in winter locating the centre—the centre is everywhere, it's the circumference that's lacking. (York 1976: 207)

Perhaps best known among Canadian adventurers to write of the Barrens and its Inuit inhabitants is iconographer Farley Mowat. In *People of the Deer* (1951) and the more damning and hard-hitting *The Desperate People* (1959) Mowat defies categorization in terms of voice and perspective. He was part adventurer, part ethnographic writer, part story teller.

He went north in 1947, after serving in WWII, and spent the better part of two years interacting with the *Ihalmiut* or folk Mowat referred to as "People of the Deer." Because Mowat was based in the southern-most portion of the Caribou Inuit's territory, he did not run into people with first-hand knowledge of the Thelon, but he did document the life that those people must have led. The cycles of starvation associated with dependence on caribou, referred to in earlier ethnographic accounts,[43] were brought into the public domain by Mowat's compelling stories. It was not an easy life, and it was a life filled with hardships that were exacerbated by contact with white people from the south. The story of his own experience with the land is curiously invisible in his northern musings.

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[43] The comments and considerations of Knud Rasmussen, Kaj Birket-Smith and other ethnographers who came into contact with the Caribou Inuit are featured along with Inuit perceptions of the Barrens. One cannot forget, however, that these ethnographers were not themselves culturally neutral observation platforms and that they too, like Hornby and the others, saw the North as a place in which to play out adventure dramas. For them the west coast of Hudson Bay and the north coast of the Arctic Ocean were exotic places to realize their explorer's dreams. They squabbled about the relative worth

The persistently troubling thing about Mowat's writing on the subject is that one always gets the impression that the standard by which he is judging the Inuit situation is a southern, technologized life. Not to diminish or to underplay the genuine, human suffering of the people Mowat encountered, ethnographically speaking, his accounts of their lives have not a ring of authenticity that make them attractive or useful sources of information for this investigation. However, Mowat's work is noteworthy as a general source of context for the life on the land lived by Caribou Inuit, at least as Mowat found it in the Kazan River in the late 1940s. Mowat's work stands with a number of more or less popular accounts of Inuit life written on the basis of sojourns in the north by anthropologically inclined authors in the post World War II period. Examples of these include *Caribou Eskimo of the Upper Kazan River in Keewatin.* (Harper 1964),[44] *Eskimo Summer* (Leechman 1945) and *Eskimo Townsmen* (Honigmann and Honigmann 1965). Mowat's work

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and validity of their findings: for example, in 1913 ethnographer Christian Leden (Leden 1990) made a number of journeys between Churchill and Chesterfield inlet collecting Eskimo songs and music. Birket-Smith (1929) wrote of this work, "The information given in this book about the life of the Eskimos is, without being otherwise indicated, taken just as often from Greenland and other places as from the Barren Grounds, and excels besides by such thorough inaccuracy of detail that it is useless as a scientific work. I have therefore as a rule preferred to leave this book entirely out of consideration" (26). Birket-Smith, by contrast, published an equally shaky volume on Chipewyan ethnology on the basis of one month in Churchill. In fact, though, none of these scientists actually touched the lands of the Thelon Game Sanctuary and as such have nothing more, beyond this perception of the barrens as science-lab and adventure-stage, to contribute to this work.

[44] Francis Harper spent six months living at the Nueltin Lake trading post, apparently at the same time as Farley Mowat, but according to Luste (1991: pers. comm.) neither seems willing to acknowledge the other.

happened to be specifically about the People of the Deer in the Barrens, but all of these volumes, perhaps because done with the assumptions of traditional ethnography, do not examine or explore in any overt way the land knowledge or attitudes toward place. It must also be said, as final word on the contribution of Farley Mowat's work to this study, that he was in the vanguard of people who began the education of the Canadian populace (including the government) on matters Inuit. There were people like Father Joseph Buliard[45] and Father Arthur Thibert[46] who carried on their work with the Caribou Inuit almost out of public purview, but following Mowat's hugely successful works on the Ihalmiut (and perhaps because of them) there was a flurry of government publishing aimed at raising the general level of awareness about the Canadian Arctic.[47]

The most mysterious group of people who came to know the Thelon in the early decades of this century—even more mysterious than Hornby, although they embodied many of the same hermit-like eccentricities—were the so-called "white trappers," the men who invaded the barrens from the south and the west to harvest the valuable fur of the white fox. Almost nothing is written about this significant group of Euro-Canadian. Mowat (1973) describes them as a group this way:

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[45] Fr. Buliard founded a Catholic mission on Garry Lake, slightly north of the Thelon, in the early 1940s. His biography *Fisher of Men* was only published recently (Choque 1987).

[46] A missionary who worked in Baker Lake and elsewhere in the region in the 1940s, also author and compiler of the first Eskimo-English Dictionary (1970). Another missionary record of the Caribou Inuit was that of Donald B. Marsh's life in the Arctic that began with his posting to Eskimo Point in 1926. This was not published, however, until 1987, by his wife Winifred Marsh, as *Echos from a Frozen Land*

[47] Examples of this are *People of Light and Dark* (van Steensel 1966) and *Eskimo Administration in Canada* (Jenness 1964), as well as the founding of *Inuktitut* magazine, a monthly journal printed in syllabics by the government and distributed throughout the Eastern Arctic.

> The Barren-Ground trappers who went out into the open plains and wintered there were another breed apart. Taciturn, withdrawn, motivated perhaps less by money than by the challenge of the unknown, they sometimes reacted to the isolation by losing the ability to live among their own kind. Existing precariously on the verge of starvation, often hundreds of miles from the nearest trading outpost, they lived in terrible aloneness. Since they had to carry everything they might need with them, they seldom weighed themselves down with steel traps. Strychnine was light and took up little space—and it was as deadly killer. When they had reached their chosen wintering grounds, usually in the early autumn, they made great sweeps through the surrounding plains slaughtering hundreds or even thousands of caribou. When winter came the carcasses were baited with poison, and the foxes, wolves, wolverines and many lesser beasts came to them, and died. But sometimes it was the men who died—and not from strychnine. Madness lay close to those who wintered in the Barrens, and there were suicides and murders. The nature of the arctic plains had not softened during the intervening years since Hearne's time. The unwary, the incautious and the unlucky who gambled their lives for white fox furs did not always return to the shelter of the forests. Most of these silent tragedies remained unrecorded except, occasionally, for brief notations in the records of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. (347-348)

As it turned out, I heard many of these grim stories from people in Lutsel K'e, who remembered the days of the white trappers and their antics. But to my knowledge, there is only one recorded voice—one book—an oral history of a white trapper called Gus D'Aoust (Harpelle, 1984) printed privately by the author in Steinbach, Manitoba. More than any other Euro-Canadian account by far, D'Aoust speaks of the barrens, and of the Thelon as home. He came to know the land through the animals he hunted and trapped and became bonded to it in a very special way. He went there for the first time in 1929 and stayed until the early sixties. The book is full of stories—like the time he had to eat his dogs, and the time his brother Hughie got lost for three months on the barrenlands. But there is also evidence in the book of his attachment to the Barrens, and to the Thelon lands. Here are some excerpts:

> I personally spent thirty winters alone on the Barrens—more than any other white man. After many years trapping in the Barren land, I was forced to quit trapping because of my legs. They were bothering me so much that I had to make the decision to quit trapping and leave my beloved Barren land. My kneecaps were worn out from walking on the tundra all those years, and as much as I love trapping, it was almost impossible for me to keep walking all those miles to my trapline. In the spring of 1965, with sadness in my heart, I left my dear trapping grounds that I had come to love so much. But I'll tell you I lost more than my right eye and my kneecaps to the Barrens. I also left my heart there, and that part of me will always be there, no matter what happens. (175)

> The Barrens is Canada's biggest wilderness, the finest spot in the world. I know because I lived right in the midst of the Barren Land for over fifty years. We didn't call it the Barrens. It was alive to us, a friendly country with very little noise. There's a reason for each noise, and the tiniest interruptions can turn into a big noise. At times the only noise was the wind blowing up a storm. The vast country of stillness was comforting to me. I was alone most of the time with my thoughts, and I was master of my mind and my surroundings. It was a way of life that only a trapper could understand, and that's why I liked it so much. The wonders of the North never ceased to amaze me, from the great caribou migration to the eternal light of summer and the endless dark of winter. There was always something beautiful surrounding me. I don't know what it is, but I always wanted to go back. I often think about the Barren Land: it's in my blood. I always had the trapping craze and it's still there even at my age. (207-208)

Like the police accounts, accounts by members of the clergy are focused more on people and events than on land. Luste (1985) mentions Oblate Father Alphonse Gasté who travelled north with Chipewyan Indians into the barrenland from his Reindeer Lake mission in northern Saskatchewan in 1868, and Father Emile Petitot who made numerous exploratory trips into the western barrens between 1864 and 1872. Donald Marsh (Marsh 1987) established a Christian mission among the Caribou Inuit at Eskimo Point in 1926 and stayed for 18 years, travelling up and down the coast of Hudson Bay. And Oblate Father Joseph Buliard was with the Caribou Inuit at Baker Lake and Garry Lake from 1939 until his unexplained disappearance from Our Lady of the Rosary Mission on Garry Lake in 1956 (Choque 1987). The documentation of these ministries is sketchy at best: Marsh's book is a compilation of notes and photographs pulled together by his wife after his death, and the work on Buliard is *about* him, not *by* him, nor, it would seem, based in any substantial way on notes or diaries of Buliard's. It is doubtful that any of these men travelled within the boundaries of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, and in any case the written record as it exists shows the concerns of churchmen were on people and events and not land.

Establishing the Thelon Game Sanctuary in 1927 for the protection of muskoxen meant that the federal government would have to take some responsibility for managing the area. The police were given the job of getting the word out to the Indian and Inuit people.[48]

The two men given the responsibility by the Federal Department of the Interior to establish a base to investigate the new Sanctuary were W.H.B. Hoare and Jack Knox. Hoare was already an experienced northern traveller, having wintered in 1925 in the Great Bear Lake area. He took the contract, left Fort McMurray in February of 1928 by dog sled and travelled to Fort Smith, where he picked up Knox. From there they lugged all their gear by sled and canoe to what became known as Warden's Grove, seven miles downstream on the Thelon River from the Hanbury/Thelon confluence. They wintered around Fort Reliance and Lutsel K'e and sledded back to Warden's Grove in April of 1929. That summer, they paddled out to Baker Lake.

Hoare's diary of this excursion has recently been published (Thomson 1990) and lays out the stupendous challenges that beset these two men as they attempted to move a two-year quota of food and supplies overland from Fort Smith to the

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[48] The best evidence of this is in the interview transcripts of Lutsel K'e and Baker Lake people contained in Chapters three and four of this thesis.

Thelon. The diary gives some idea of the rigorous conditions, the remoteness of the site, the difficulty in managing a game Sanctuary as remote as the Thelon Game Sanctuary, and of the mettle of Hoare and Knox. But like the Christian diary, Hoare's contains few comments that venture very far beyond description and reporting. Hoare's official report (Hoare 1930) and a subsequent article (Hoare 1939) betray nothing of his feelings for the land through which he had travelled. He carries out his mandate, and with precision lays out his route and findings. The only hint of what Hoare thought about the whole escapade is in a comment about the amount of work necessary to get supplies overland to the Thelon. He wrote:

> An idea of the amount of work entailed in moving our supplies may be gained from the fact that when we reached Ford lake we still had nine canoe loads which consisted chiefly of coal oil for fuel and gasoline for the canoe motor. It was necessary to travel over 200 miles on Ford Lake to relay half of this to the cache and the remainder to the portage at the east end of the lake. (14)[49]

Hoare and Knox were followed by other biologically-oriented souls in the employ of the Canadian government to add to the overall effort in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Billy Hoare went back to the Sanctuary in 1936 and again in 1937 with biologist C.H.D. Clarke who produced on that trip the classic work *A Biological Investigation of the Thelon Game Sanctuary* (Clarke 1940), and which, like the work of Billy Hoare, is fact and observation oriented to the exclusion of other impressions of the Thelon.

J.S. Tenner produced an update on Clarke's work in the 1950s (Tenner 1956a, 1956b, 1958) and since then there has been a small, but steady stream of biologists of various stripes counting, measuring and assessing the various life processes going on in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Curiously, there has been much work done on muskoxen elsewhere[50] but next to none has been done—even basic censusing—in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. The scientist who knows the Thelon Game Sanctuary best is wildlife biologist Ernie Kuyt who carried out studies from 1961-1965. Kuyt has published a number of scientific papers stemming from this, and subsequent work, and in 1988 wrote an article arguing for the maintenance of Sanctuary status for the Thelon (Kuyt 1988). But like so much of the writing on the Thelon, it is difficult if not impossible to determine whether the authors of the papers are in any way moved by the land through which they travelled.

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[49] It took them 111 days to carry this load a distance that took them 12 days when they went in the following year.

One perception of the Thelon Game Sanctuary that did not go unnoticed for long was when a 1,925 square kilometre stretch of the river valley was nominated by the Canadian Committee for the International Biological Program as an official IBP site (Nettleship and Smith 1975). They described the exceptional features as being the combination of northern transitional boreal forest and tundra communities inhabited by muskoxen, grizzly bear, caribou, wolverine, wolf, fox, ground squirrel and breeding Canada geese. It is important to keep in mind with this designation however that it was derived from existing land inventory reports and *not* from any person or persons with great personal attachment to the place.

The next step in the process of establishing the final disposition for all undeveloped land in Canada after a designation like that of the International Biological Program, is to assess the space through the grids of the Canadian Park Service. The Thelon Game Sanctuary happens to fall into Natural Region 16, as designated by the System Planning Division of the Canadian Park Service. The inventory and assessment of park potential in this, and all, regions in the system is designed, at least, to be a mechanistic and equitable process of finding areas that represent the values of the whole region and then deciding which one(s) of these should be put forward for nomination as a national park. Boddon (1980) organized the project and identified Wager Bay, Chesterfield-Rankin Inlets, Bellot Strait, and the Thelon Game Sanctuary as candidate areas of natural significance. Assessing a wide variety of biotic and abiotic themes in these four areas, the Bodden team came to the conclusion that the Chesterfield-Rankin Inlets area contained the highest percentage of natural themes, and achieved the highest and second highest scores for biotic and abiotic themes respectively. The Thelon Game Sanctuary ranked second overall in the process. The consultants recommended that Chesterfield-Rankin Inlets be given serious consideration for park status in Region 16.[51]

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[50] Work by David R. Gray of the National Museum on Bathurst Island still stands as the material to read on this subject, i.e. "Movements and Behaviour of Tagged Muskoxen *(Ovibos moschatus)* on Bathurst Island, N.W.T." *Musk-Ox* **25**, 1979, 29-46.

Although, in theory at least, not as dependent on secondary sources as the International Biological Program assessment, the park planning process is an appreciation of places like the Thelon Game Sanctuary that is based on very limited field work. The way the place imposes meaning on the minds of consultants and park planners is through quick fly-in-fly-out reconnaissance visits and lots of literature review.[52]

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[51] Curiously, with Chesterfield-Rankin Inlets coming first in the assessment and the Thelon Game Sanctuary coming second, until very recently, the only area in Region 16 being considered for national park status was Wager Bay. How that works is anybody's guess!

[52] The bibliography of the Region 16 consultant's report is *excellent!*

The politics of northern conservation reserves has been a touchy issue since the Dominion of Canada first gained legislative authority over portions of the Canadian Arctic in 1970 (Hunt 1976: 31), and with the shrinking amount and burgeoning demand for all types of land use. How and for what reasons a piece of land is valued by politicians are very difficult questions to answer. Attempting to determine what politicians think about the Thelon Game Sanctuary is a case in point. It is very difficult to know where to look to discover the political perceptions of the place. Three possibly unrelated events are worthy of inclusion here: 1) The 1:4,000,000 scale map of the Northwest Territories has, for years, shown the Thelon Game Sanctuary; however, on the most recent edition of the map (1990) the Thelon Game Sanctuary is nowhere to be found; 2) In letters to Paul Quassa, President of the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (February 13, 1991) and to Robert de Cotret, federal Minister of the Environment, Gordon Wray, territorial Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, (with no mention of the Parks System Planning model) out-of-the-blue, as it were, nominated the Thelon Game Sanctuary as a national park; and 3) In published Transportation Strategy (Wray, 1990) the same minister who was to nominate the Thelon Game Sanctuary as a national park proposes a "major new highway" right through the middle of the Sanctuary. Coming to terms with these political positions with respect to the Thelon Game Sanctuary is really beyond the province of this investigation, but they need to be highlighted now to make the point that this place of some natural and heritage value stemming from people's interaction with the land itself appears to have political value as well.

Shortly after Parks Canada was assessing the park potential of a variety of sites in the natural region of which the Thelon Game Sanctuary is a part, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development released the federal Northern Mineral Policy. It mandated officials to "review resource utilization in the Thelon Game Sanctuary with the objective of ensuring the widest possible range of activities compatible with the original goal of musk-ox protection" (C.A.C. 1989, 2). This initiative started a groundswell of support which resulted in the federal government recommending against changing the status of the Sanctuary to allow prospecting or mining.[53] The central report (Eng et al. 1988) on which the Conservation Advisory Committee made their recommendations provided an interesting, if arm's length, impression of what people think about the Thelon lands and why they are important. Perhaps the most powerful piece of information for this study from the Northern Mineral Policy controversy was a letter written by outfitter and biologist Alex Hall which clearly illustrated that while he had the most to gain in business terms from keeping the Sanctuary as it is, he was also the person who apparently knew the most, and perhaps cared the most about its future unaltered disposition. (See Hall's comments and letter in the next section of this chapter.)

Claim maps reveal that mining companies have interests in lands that touch the border of the Thelon Game Sanctuary in several places. Clearly, the hitherto unprospected lands of the Sanctuary[54] are being eyed by the mineral extraction industry. A report entitled *The Mineral Potential of the Thelon Basin/Thelon Game Sanctuary* (NWT Geology Division 1988) confirms this fact:

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[53] The up-coming section in this part of the dissertation dealing with recreational canoeists details the written responses to this Northern Mineral Policy.

> The unexplored portions of the Thelon Basis and the pre-Thelon unconformity within the Thelon Game Sanctuary represents much of the best exploration potential for uranium in the world. If all or parts of the Thelon Game Sanctuary became available for mineral exploration, several exploration companies would be interested immediately and many more would join if energy prices rise and reports of discoveries are made. (10)

The people involved in this industry are not totally unsupportive, however, of a conservation agenda for the Thelon area. Following the designation of the Thelon River under the Canadian Heritage Rivers System,[55] the deputy minister of Economic Development and Tourism for the Government of the Northwest Territories wrote to interested mining and exploration companies to tell them about the nomination. Letters of support for the Heritage River status for the Thelon were received by the deputy minister from PNC Explorations (Canada) Co. Ltd. (March 20, 1989), Cominco Exploration (May 4, 1989), the NWT Chamber of Mines (June 8, 1989), Central Electricity Generating Board Exploration (Canada) Ltd. (March 17, 1989) and from Urangesellschaft Canada Limited (May 12, 1989), the principal developer of the Kiggavik mine site located south of Schultz Lake between the Sanctuary and Baker Lake.

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[54] Dewar (1978) reports being on a private prospecting expedition led by Wilson when they found the bodies of Hornby et. al. in 1928, but apparently this report has been lost, or did not reveal anything of commercial significance.

[55] This initiative sponsored by the Territorial Government is motivated politically as well as environmentally and has produced a wide assortment of publications and useful research on various aspects of the Thelon; however, with the exception of some oral history interviews done by researcher David Murray in Baker Lake in the late 1980s, all of this material is based on existing secondary sources and therefore of little utility to this particular intellectual cause. It is important to know that the *Nomination Document for the Thelon River* was signed by the mayor of Baker Lake, the territorial minister of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and an official for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and not by the Chief of the Łutsel K'e Band or by any other possible sponsoring parties.

It should be mentioned that the threat of hydro development in the early 1980s, the threat of prospecting within the Sanctuary in the mid-1980s, and the threat of uranium development in the late 1980s, have all helped galvanize local views and opinions regarding the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Part of the reason people were as forthcoming and articulate as they were in Baker Lake during the period of interviews for this study was due, in some measure, to the thinking that had gone on earlier in response to large scale mineral and energy development proposals.

Before moving on to consider the largest group of current users of the Sanctuary, the recreational canoeists, mention must be made of the falling from the sky of COSMOS 954, the nuclear-powered Soviet satellite. As it happened, in the winter of 1977/78 a group of Canadian and American adventurers were commemorating the 50th anniversary of John Hornby's death by wintering in the Sanctuary (Common 1978; Norment 1990). It was these unfortunate people who made first contact with the radioactive debris when the spent satellite wobbled out of orbit in January of 1978. Their wilderness reverie was shattered by *Operation Morning Light*, the joint U.S./Canadian effort to clean up the mess. The military accounts of the operation shivered with the descriptions of isolation, darkness and cold. “A small group of Canadian servicemen now scattered on bases from Chilliwack to Trenton know what it's like to live in the eye of a hurricane,” wrote one scribe (Aikman 1978). The tales of frigidity and hardship in the ice-gripped Canadian north were in all of the papers at the time. For these men, the Thelon

Game Sanctuary was a forbidding place. Work crews would take short search sorties from the confines of heated tents in the miniature city that they called "Camp Garland." Their impression of the place was austere, frighteningly so at times.

Unlike Norment, Common and the rest of the overwintering adventurers on whom COSMOS 954 fell, most recreational users of the sanctuary travel the land in summer, by canoe. The first recreational canoe trip of the modern era that touched the Thelon Game Sanctuary was taken in 1955 by American Arthur R. Moffatt, who paddled from Black Lake, Saskatchewan to Baker Lake via the Dubawnt and Thelon Rivers. It was an ambitious and ground-breaking trip that cost Moffatt his life—death by exposure. In Moffat's prospectus, published posthumously in a two-part exposé in *Sports Illustrated* (Moffatt 1959), he predicts that the two major problems to be faced would be food and fire. He writes of getting a letter from J.B. Tyrrell (the inspiration for the trip) who tells Moffatt that he'll need a couple of high-powered rifles to shoot game at long range because starvation otherwise will threaten from early in the trip. Moffatt seems buoyed by that. "The only real adventure," he writes, "pits man against nature."[56]

The account says almost nothing about the land through which the men were travelling, except about the fierceness of the weather—snow, sub-zero temperatures—the shortness of food and their difficulties in dealing with those and other exigencies of the trip. On the 14th of September, still many miles from Baker Lake, two canoes capsized in a rapid. A fifth member of the party fell into the water trying to rescue the other four. Moffatt died that day of exposure (hypothermia). A "real adventure" to be sure.

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[56] Moffatt 1959: 71.

Writing about this tragedy 33 years later, George Grinnell (the man who fell into the water trying to rescue Moffatt) had the following to say:

> At the inquest held by the Mounties, it was disclosed that we had taken holidays [i.e. chose not to paddle] on more than half the days of the trip. One Mountie commented that we had "lost our sense of reality." Actually, we thought of it differently. We felt that we had discovered reality. Something had transformed us as Moffatt knew it would: we had begun to feel an inner peace, that sense of gratitude not only for the gifts of the caribou [that they were eating], which had died for us, the mushrooms, the fish, the berries, but also a sense of gratitude toward one another, our little group of kind friends across the abyss, and gratitude for the awesome harmony, the beauty and the terror that we had discovered on that inward voyage across the "Barrenlands."[57]

The first recreational canoe trip on the Hanbury-Thelon River canoe route was led by Eric W. Morse in 1962. Since then, there has been a steady stream of paddlers from across North America and around the world who have paddled the Thelon. With some exceptions, the accounts tend to be matter-of-fact journey chronologies with notes on natural history, schedule, weather, occasionally something on the land itself, and even more occasionally, notes on how it was that they ended up paddling on the Thelon.

For purposes of exploring the range of ways in which the Thelon lands impinged on the consciousness of the various recreational visitors, it would be ideal to have some point of comparison smaller than and more defined than, say, the whole of the Sanctuary. Fortunately, the experience of most canoeists is a linear one,[58] travelling some portion of the Thelon river. There are points along the way of natural and cultural interest. I've chosen two of those, one geographic in nature—the Hanbury River/Thelon River confluence— and one more cultural/historic in its bearing—Hornby Point, named for obvious reasons. Other interesting snippets of river accounts are included when appropriate:

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[57] Grinnell 1988: 56.

* * *

> We were now approaching the junction where the Hanbury flows into the Thelon, and the start of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. We began to encounter muskoxen and wished to stalk them for photographs, but here we found we were thwarted by an amusing situation. Bill had just come from Malaya, and he could not rid his mind of their resemblance to water buffalo, which are dangerous beasts. Any attempts by the rest of us to get close to muskoxen were foiled by Bill's cries of alarm. ... We had enjoyed truly splendid scenery all the way down the Hanbury, with its stark eskers and its rapids but, as the river approaches the junction, it becomes even more dramatic. (Morse 1987: 92- 93)

> Shortly below Warden's Grove is Hornby Point, and the cabin where John Hornby and his two young companions, Christian and Adlard, lost a lingering battle against starvation in 1927, after a poorly organized attempt to winter there. We stopped to look for what traces remained of their ordeal. It was a cool day, we were tired after a long paddle, and we badly needed our afternoon snack, but it seemed a little unfeeling to be munching chocolate there where dry bones and old scraps of leather had been their only sustenance in their last weeks of life. (Morse 1987: 95)

* * *

> We flew east ... over tundra with sand eskers, flats with frost polygons and upheavals, and caribou trails, over huge cliffs, canyons, and the falls of the Lockhart and Hanbury Rivers, to the junction of the Hanbury and the bigger, east-flowing Thelon, where a fringe of extended spruce braves the arctic barrens. Here, on the rock and sand of an ice-bulldozed shore we had tea with our pilot, waved him goodbye, and began our five weeks of camping and canoeing on a wild and beautiful river, as voluminous as, and often much broader than the Mississippi, with five expansive lakes en route. ... We located about 35 muskoxen on the southeasterly side of the Thelon river just below its junction with the Hanbury River ... Bill and I kept behind a screen of clumped black spruce and approached up-wind. They never smelt or saw us. ... Often we heard a deep rumbling sound resembling distant thunder. They mut-

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[58] Although the Back River constitutes the northern boundary of the preserve and the Dubawnt River a portion of the southeastern boundary, I have chosen to focus primarily on people who paddled the Thelon River which traverses the heart of the Sanctuary.

ter to themselves. At times, bands of muskoxen cantered off over a barren hill, alarmed, it seemed, by the photographers. They never formed the well-known protective circle. (Rossbach 1966: 4-5)

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MAN SPEAKS
We came to the North with canoes
  and the summer sun ...
and were swallowed into the land ...
so immense ... so lonely ...
... so barren ... so beautiful.

A land cloaked in growth and grass
  and water and sky ...
and more of the same
as far as the eye could reach ...
overwhelms the spirits of the
solitary visitor.

A land so warm and kind
could turn to chill and ice ...
or cover the waters with wind tossed
white ...
and punish the weak or foolish
with an icy tomb ...
whispered 'beware' in our ear.

We bent our backs into the wind ...
under the sun or rain ...
with the portage pack ...
across the late ice ...
down the Dubawnt to Baker Lake.

THE LAND SPEAKS
I am and you must receive me as I am.
When we meet ... do not come
with hope or a faint heart ...
  accept each day
  do your best
  there are no guarantees.

Take care ...
avoid the seething rapids
and sleep soundly on the soft moss ...
dreaming of ... glorious sunsets
and what the morrow may bring.
~~~

A few frail footprints
  were left by those before you.
A decayed cabin ...
  moans of endless
  frozen winter nights.
A stone image ...
  silently communes
  from someone long ago.
A child's grave on a hilltop ...
  is blest with tears
  of love and sacrifice.

The birds and fish
the animals
the Inuit
they are my family.
Fragile, innocent of evil and avarice ...
treat them gently as you pass.

But an ominous change
blows with the south wind.
'How long can I be as I am?
Will your children's children
recognize my face ... your memory?'
(Luste 1971: 44)

*****

When we entered the Thelon just 45 miles from its source, we found a wide, fast-moving river flowing between high gravel banks. Although the river passed through rather flat, monotonous country, it was pure pleasure to coast along at speeds up to ten miles per hour without a single rapid to negotiate. Our second day on the Thelon was highlighted by the unusual sighting of a large bull moose, a full seventy-five miles from the forest. ... Travelling down a river in a canoe can be likened to driving down a highway in a car; scene after scene rolls by, but one feels somewhat apart from the land. So as often as we could we hiked off from our campsites to satisfy the urge for direct contact with the land. (Hall & Voigt 1976: 27- 28)

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We got out for a look about 3:00 pm to find part of the cabin still standing. The walls were about 5 feet high, the roof was missing and some junk was lying around ... tin cans and parts of their old trunk. The stove and the door were in the museum at Yellowknife. The three graves were still visible with JH in the middle flanked on the left by Edgar Christian (sic) and on the right by Harold Allard (sic). The crosses are still intact and have weathered well over the years. We took some pictures, nosed around and collected some Muskox fur from the nearby bushes. Dianne mentioned then that some fellow had a LIP grant to collect the fur from bushes but only got 3 ounces for his effort and 5000 dollars. From there we went on to a small stream coming in to the south bank where DR began to fish. (Rees 1973: 14)

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We paddle and portage past two thundering falls to the Thelon River. Suddenly, past a narrows, the land looms expansive and grand, with huge hills slipping upward along the river. We feel as if we are in the bottom of an enormous bowl. A majestic place, this land of purple heathered hills and glacier carved rock. Perhaps this is why we came. ... Their cabin is still here, along with three shallow graves, in a small spruce grove along the river. It is a peaceful place; the tundra seems at rest with itself. The price exacted of Hornby is no different than that demanded of any tundra dweller. Be fit to live, or die. Few mourn the caribou, bled, hounded and finally slashed to death by the hungry pack. Fewer mourn the wolf, stumbling numbly over windpacked snow, tongue flopping, eyes glazed, crumpling for the last time. We are not special in the eyes of the land. We are here on the terms of the tundra.[59] (Olson 1979: 45-46)

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The confluence of the Hanbury and Thelon is awe inspiring. Looking upstream on the Thelon, we had our first sighting of mature spruce trees. Down stream are golden sand bars and the flat barren land of the tundra stretches away to the far distant horizon. The river is broad with numerous sand bars and a sluggish current. Eight days had been allotted for the 166 km to this point. However, because the many portages were not as difficult as had been anticipated, we were two days ahead of schedule. (Greenacre 1983: 9)

*****

7 Come 11

The Demon calls the shots
On the treeless turf
Where life becomes his crapgame
And the croupier's his serf.
He owns the dice and tables
And beckon all, "Come in"
To gamble here a little while
And take a chance to win.

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[59] This section is preceded in the text of the article by a sidebar on "Canoe Selection" that reads "The trip ... selected ... the Jensen Whitewater II (We-no-nah), the Voyageur (Mad River), the Charger (Sawyer) and the Voyageur II (Pat Moore). All are high-sided 18½-foot fiberglass canoes that offer good performance with heavy loads in heavy water. All have efficient hull that are significantly faster and less tiring to paddle than more traditional canoes." "On the terms of the tundra" indeed!

Some people spend their entire lives
Sittin' on their asses
Or, worse yet, lying down
They miss the Demon's passes.

So grab those bones when it's your turn
And shake 'em hard against the wall
And read the dots they scatter.
The fate you threw just then, my friend,
Counts more than you've allotted
You took a fling at life
AND LIVED
The rest sat back and rotted (Abel 1981)

*****

The bugs have been terrible,
The company has been tremendous,
My husband has been tolerant,
My tan has ... what tan?
My partner is tired and techy,
I love this *CANOEING*!
[60]

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On the first couple of days of our trip as the bugs threatened to provide a sequel to Hitchcock's "The Birds," the Duchess [of York] asked me, "What is it about this canoeing [on the Thelon River] that you like?" Trying to explain the sense of accomplishment, closeness and serenity among others on a canoe trip is difficult at the best of times, but perhaps more onerous in the N.W.T.. However, a week into the trip, the Duchess turned to me and said, "I love it!" Another person lured to the Barrens. (Thompson 1987: 11)

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In 15 years of travel throughout the Canadian North, I have never observed as much wildlife as we consistently experienced on the Thelon journey. My diary tells the story: more than 50,000 caribou, about 100 muskoxen, six moose, three grizzlies, three wolves, several red fox, scores of eagles, hawks and falcons, and a multitude of smaller birds. Had we made the trip a month earlier, the countryside would have been filled with whistling swans, Canada, blue, snow and lesser geese, oldsquaws and greater skuas. (Struzik 1989: 68)

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[60] From a tripper's log in a cairn on Hoare Lake, a note signed "Sarah, Duchess of York, August 1987," as quoted in Rogers (1988).

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> The first trickle of animals became a steady flow, then an invasion of thousands of caribou. A moving mass of caribou blanketed the landscape. I flattened myself against a cluster of five little spruce trees, not much taller than myself, while the caribou herd flowed past and around me. Newborn calves kept pace beside the cows, while little knots of antlered bulls trotted together, their handsome heads held high. The air was filled with the peculiar click of caribou hoofs. It reeked of fresh manure. As the herd moved across the tundra, little groups circled out of the main herd, stopping to graze before rejoining the moving mass further along the flank. (Thomson 1989: 36)

*****

> Paddling through the Ursus Islands felt a bit like paddling the South Pacific. The skies were brilliant blue and the river braided between sandy "atolls." All that were missing were palm and balmy breezes. (Woodley 1990: 10)

*****

> The footprint was a bear's pug mark, a juvenile bear's, but because of the human associations of the place and it being a sunny day I couldn't help thinking we were in a Club Med setting. Then the sun went behind a cloud, and the sand took on the physical properties it must have had when it was frozen grit in winter.
>
> These incredible mood swings occasioned by the weather were felt by everyone on the trip. At one minute we would be overlooking the river, seeing its beauty stretch into the distance, and the next minute, as the ceiling dropped and cloud moved in, we could imagine a band of travellers from Hearne's day struggling along the ice in February. The caribou that rested out in the open to escape wolves retreated quietly. The band advanced, their dark skin and clothing looking like rags against the snow. ... Nature may well be a "maniac," and I couldn't delude myself that this place cared for human beings. But for a moment, against all reason, as the water shivered and the light flew, I knew that this land was capable of love. (Kelly 1990: 77-78)

*****

> The Thelon is magic, and it's the best. The river flows through 1,100 km of the most remote region of the North American continent, and its dramatic isolation penetrates the paddler with every stroke. Hundreds of miles above the continuous treeline, the Thelon valley protects the only genuine forest oasis in the arctic. This unique forest in turn provides protection for one of the highest concentrations of arctic wildlife and bird found anywhere. (East Wind 1991: 8)

Visitors to the Thelon Game Sanctuary who are not in some way attached to a canoe are very rare indeed, especially in the literature, but presumably there are biologists, photographers, and a very select group of tourists who have seen the Sanctuary sights from the air and perhaps dropped in for a quick shore lunch or to stalk a herd of caribou or muskoxen. Two such people are National Geographic Society writer Louis de la Haba and photographer Richard A. Cooke III, both of whom made short floatplane visits to the Sanctuary in the summer of 1980. De la Haba (1982) called the Sanctuary "an uninhabited, 21,500-square-mile area" (61). And as regards his impression of the place, the predominant feature of his visit was bugs ... lots of mosquitoes and blackflies he called "scourges of the north." He writes:

> The forest ... was indeed primeval, clad in "garments green," crepuscular, mysterious. It was so starkly different from the country I had seen in the north—the windswept tundra that rolled mile upon empty mile form forest's edge to the arctic sea. So different, yet so similar in the feelings it evoked—a sense of wildness, of vastness, of power. Forest and tundra—both are the essence of the great Shield, the untamed heart of Canada, formed of ancient bedrock and forever rules by nature's elemental forces. (81)

Finally, Alex Hall of Canoe Arctic Inc. provided to this project a stack of letters clients had sent to him over the 17-year history of his business to say "Thank you." Most of these, in one way or another, said something about the Canoe Arctic Thelon River trip of which the writer had been a participant. Three excerpts give some idea of the flavour of these documents.

> The trip on the Hanbury and Thelon Rivers has become a memory, but an unforgettable one! This was certainly one of the most impressive trips I imagine I could ever make. I am proud and thankful that I had the opportunity to travel in the tundra, where few other people have been and to see this beautiful part of your country. ... I was deeply impressed by the rich wildlife, the innumerable birds, the herds of muskoxen and of course the wolves. Holding a wolf-pup in my arms really was a unique experience (I hope the little fellow got away safely and is still happily and healthily living there). This is something to tell my grandchildren about. (Hans Wiedemar—Bern, Switzerland)

*****

Silence

  You are seen before you see because
the eyes that search so clean belong
to the Wolf.
  Secrets shall unfold, for with its nose
they are told
unto the Wolf.
  The Wolf has ears that hear the fears
of those held dear, so hide them well
from the Wolf.
  When endurance treats those prowling
feet with stealth so sweet, can you then
elude the Wolf?
  Well man is man as must he be
and he has sworn from battles torn.
"If meet we must then I entrust
the victors trophy shall not be me!"
  Now sadness stalks
      mans silent walks
          but he is warm
              because he wears
  the wolf.

UNNAMED RIVER   We hear you whisper from your highlands in the white clouds, where the snow ice starts your heart beat; spruces grow with painful slowness and the eagle watches over you.   The sun caresses; you awaken; rivulets are now cascading—smoothing stones that play your tune, and the grizzly owns the view.

THELON RIVER   Now you call us to your grayling laden riffles, to your winding banks and eskers, where the tundra goes forever and endless roams the caribou. Jade and quartzite we may find you, but you hide your gold stones from us, and of your many coloured berries, the best are sweetly blue.

THELON RIVER   Sighing loudly; nurture moose and geese aplenty, house the muskox and your wolf clans. Fed by the Hanbury, Clarke, Finnie, and the Tammarvi, just to name a few.   Growing pains have now transformed you; gravel bars are ever changing; trees have left you—barren—lonely; and with each breeze your flowers nod anew.

ADVENTURE RIVER   Sing your swan song as your waters carry forward to lake Beverly, Aberdeen, Baker, Chesterfield, then to the sea; and the time we spent, like your current—oh it surely flew!   Now we know your many voices like the loon upon your waters and we are captured, just as the lupine hold the morning dew.

ADVENTURE RIVER This toast, we raise to you. (Richard Martindale—Granby, Connecticut)

—

As a final comment on these letters, I was struck by the number of them that mentioned points such as the trip as an ego booster, fulfilment of a dream, life-changing experience, unforgettable memory, or the way in which the outing with Canoe Arctic Inc. allowed them to touch the spirit of Arctic adventure. Although disparate in content and tone, the thread that binds all of these comments is the extent to which they indicate how the correspondent feels the Thelon trip has distinguished him or her—set the person apart from his/her peers in the office. There is a sense that in signing on with Canoe Arctic Inc., they have purchased something of great value, and part of that value was derived from the uniqueness—or exclusivity—of the experience. To some extent—an observation based on comments such as those mentioned above—Hall's clients, in signing on for a Canoe Arctic trip, had purchased a rare commodity, and for some, it would seem, the experience with the land was little other than that—a *thing* purchased and captured on film for all back home to admire, a reason for the trip participant to gain the notoriety and recognition desired by everyone.

Experiential Texts from the Sanctuary Itself

My first visit to the Sanctuary was in 1983 on a six-week canoe trip from Lynn Lake, Manitoba to Qamanittuaq. The impressions of that experience were still strong, but I felt it important to re-visit the place, alone, to explore it in the context of this research. To give a reader some sense of what happened during this two week excursion, I have laid out a series of journal excerpts that begins on a family holiday at a cabin in Algonquin park that immediately preceeded the summer trip to the Thelon.

> Months of thinking, writing and active research on the Thelon project have been deftly and effortlessly subjugated by this trip with Gail, Molly and Laurel to the cabin on North Tea Lake. Life here is deliciously simple and uncluttered. ... But just today, as the idea of getting out the Thelon maps (to fine-tune plans for a 5-week research trip on the tundra which begins in only *nine* days) wheedled its way into the daily round, I was conscious for the first time of a level of deep, subconscious processing of the Thelon material that has been going on all the while. My dreams these nights by the Amable du Fond falls' roar have been like windows or peep holes on a room full of trolls and file clerks sifting, sorting, weighing and analysing every photo, every interview, every book, every article, every conversation, every nuance, every impression having to do with my doctoral research. This insight, this vision of how a brain might work has added substantially to the sense of peace that has finally calmed the frenzied tangle of loose ends remaining after courses, comprehensive exams, field trials and so on. Today has reinforced the still- growing sense of destiny in doing this project and making a contribution (i.e. it's no accident that we're here, now, doing this, writing this, and planning for the final phase of field work.) In *The Doors to Perception*—an essay I've been reading here—Aldous Huxley writes of his mescalin experience and how it is a "door in the wall" limiting perception. In many ways, my experiences with the Snowdrift Chipewyan for me was such a "door," and this is why, perhaps, Huxley's concluding paragraph so nicely and poignantly maps onto how I feel right now: "*But the man who comes back through the door in the wall will never be quite the same as the man who went out. He will be wiser but less cocksure, happier but less self-satisfied, humbler in acknowledging his ignorance yet better equipped to the relationship of words to things, of systematic reasoning to the unfathomable mystery which it tries, forever vainly, to comprehend.*" Amen

The summer trip north began on July 21 from Ottawa. There was a feature in the inflight magazine on Inuit art. Two quotes from Rankin Inlet resident Ollie Ittinuar caught my eye. I stuck them in my journal, and recount them here:

> But we want to tell you why we need these old things and why the carvings we make mean so much to us. These things we make are of the land, as we are of the land. This is our heritage. Your heritage is in museums. Our museum is the rocks, the water, the spaces and the northern land. When we make things, we do this in the likeness of what we are.
>
> Inuit want young people to know about their heritage. The carvings we make will help. We only do this so people can learn. There are many teachings in what has been done. An important teaching is that we must all show respect and kindness to the animals and the land. They respect

> us by giving themselves to us. So we must return this kindness. If you understand this, you will live much better. (Ollie Ittinuar, Rankin Inlet)

The flight from Yellowknife to the Sanctuary was as sole passenger on a Twin Otter heading out to pick up a film crew who had been paddling a portion of the river. To facilitate photographing the land as we flew, pilot Mike Murphy agreed to remove the rear doors of the aircraft. I had brought a climbing harness and some lengths of webbing to tie myself in for the flight. It was a splendid morning, and the highlight of the flight was seeing Noel Drybone's cabin at Fort Reliance, his second cabin at the foot of Artillery Lake and the whole route of our winter snowmobile journey from Artillery Lake eastward. This flight was like no other, because for most of the time we were in the air, we were over ground that I had travelled at one time or another either on foot, by snowmachine or by canoe. The flight, however, ended with double uncertainty: the film crew was not where it was supposed to be; and I was a bit rattled by a short conversation with pilot Murphy just before he left me alone on the river and went to look again for the lost film party. Journal record of the conversation goes like this:

M: Who's pickin' you up or are you goin' all the way to Baker?
J: Tom Faess, "Tundra Tom," on the 31st at Beverly Lake.
M: Oh ... Tom. We *all* know "Tundra Tom." You knew he blew a jug eh? Had to walk 22 miles back to his lodge.
J: What's a jug?
M: A cylinder on his [Cessna] 185.
J: How many cylinders does a 185 have?
M: Six.
J. Oh.
M: Yeah, he left his plane where he landed 22 miles from his lodge on Whitefish Lake.
J: Oh. What happens now?
M: He'll have to fix it. When was he pickin' you up?
J: The 31st.
M: He might have it done by then.
J: Oh. Is a "jug" something you can fix in the field?

M: Oh yeah.
J: What, do you get the parts and a mechanic and go to the plane?
M: Yeah. You charter a plane, get an engineer—there's lots of 'em around—fly over to Whitefish, or wherever it is, and fix it.
J: Oh.
M: Or Tom might fix it himself. He's pretty mechanically inclined.
J: Oh.

Mike took off again to try again to find the lost film crew. As it transpired there was a great deal of truth in what he said: Tom Faess never did turn up to pick me up, but more on that and the insights from being left on the tundra in a moment. It puzzled me how a party of four and two canoes—the film crew—with its seasoned northern trip leader could, apparently, just disappear from the Thelon River. But, thinking the plane would eventually find them, I went about the business of settling in on the river. I decided to stay right below Lookout Point, where I'd been dropped for at least one night. Walking the mile or so of shoreline between where I was camped and the old Canadian Wildlife Service cabin I was struck by the amount of evidence that suggested a great deal had gone on *before* I arrived:

There are ice-scars, recent ones, on the bushes high on the banks of the river that suggest the presence of much higher water in the spring, moving with great force, or at least moving the ice with great force. In places there are matted lines of white caribou hair well up from the current water level. The shore near the water is green and wet, as if the water is dropping as I sit here watching it. There are goose feathers and goose prints and black, wizened finger-like goose turds along the beach and in the water, but there are no geese. There is the bleaching breastbone of a goose (a small one) or a ptarmigan that makes me think that when the geese were here, there might have been hungry gulls too. A fox, I suspect, would have eaten the bird bones and all.

I've decided that this land—this land on the north side of the river between CWS cabin and Lookout Point must have been GOOSELAND earlier this year. There are wolf tracks, and muskoxen tracks (and muskoxen) and caribou and caribou tracks, but the predominant messages from the mud and beaches is that GEESE WERE HERE. There is down and adult flight feathers. There are tracks, lots of old tracks made when the ground was softer. There are goose droppings all over the ground. And the water here, though clean looking, runs over rocks richly covered with algae and various other plants. There is white froth and a brown scum along the edge which may be due to water enrichment from the goose droppings. I've heard geese calling on the other side of the river, but to date have seen none.

[Inside the tent] Whoa! ... a caribou just about ran over the tent. I guess with all the speculation about [the film crew] I'm a bit twitchy. Too buggy to stick my head out, but I did get a quick glimpse of it—a small one jogging along the beach. Although the bugs are pretty grim as the sun gets low in the sky, evening is a fine time to paddle around here. The light tonight was spectacular. The greens seem to fare better, at least in terms of recognizing individual hues, in the long yellowish light of evening.

Tonight the river had sort of an oily quality to it, sinewy streams of reflected sunlight, smooth and strong. Funny, I don't remember there being this much current in the river. It was a lovely, leisurely, even lazy paddle—10 km with hardly any effort. Two stops—photo ops—one amazing sandy bank criss-crossed by caribou and muskoxen footprints and another stop at a promontory.

The view out the door tonight is quite striking, but also quite tranquil. The trees on the opposite bank serrate the sky edge of the black shore. Above that swirls of grey and pink and a pearl-tone night sky change imperceptibly from one glance to the next. The river is like a giant conveyor carrying reflections to the sea.

A raven woke me up this morning ... their grumbles and squawks and chatter sound just like human voices. For a while there I thought that maybe Raven had come by to tell me something. Perhaps that the film crew has been found.

Later the next day, pilot Mike Murphy dropped in again in the Twin Otter with the news that the film crew had not yet been found. By this time they had been to Baker Lake for fuel and had picked up Michael Whittier, a doctor, who was to join the film crew for the next part of its shooting schedule. Whittier and I had worked together on an earlier project, and I knew him to be a calm and and accurate judge of situations like this. We both knew the associate producer on the crew, a canoeist called David Pelly. I began to wonder if something untoward had happened to the film crew when Whittier said, "I can't help feeling that something is terribly wrong." I spent the next few hours figuring in my journal on the fate of the film crew:

So what could have happened to the film crew?

Facts

1. The group was dropped off.

2. They intended to get picked up at Lookout Point.

3. They are not *obviously* present on the river between the Hanbury/Thelon confluence and Baker Lake.

4. This is *very* unlike Pelly. He takes pride in being *where* he said he would be *when* he said he would be there.

5. We will have to find them.

6. Groups on the river (2) have *not* seen them.

Curiosities

1. Pelly is a man of schedule, a man of his word. Something very powerful must have kept him from meeting his flight and honouring his word.

2. I don't really understand how, logistically, they got all their people, boats and equipment in the right place at the right time.

3. If they hiked away from the river and something happened, they wouldn't have taken their canoes with them. How could two coloured canoes be missed by the pilots?

4. If something did happen, why did they not have something to alert passing canoeists, or the plane as it flew over 3 times in the last 24 hours?

WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED?

1. They didn't get dropped off. So where are they? Four people don't just vanish.

2. They are without canoes and are, or were, walking.

3. A bear attacked and somehow injured or killed all four people.

4. Food poisoning—something virulent in the food they were carrying incapacitated them all.

5. A river accident is unlikely.

6. The weather has been excellent during this week. Delay due to weather is unlikely.

7. Some virulent form of insect venom incapacitated them all. Why this year? People have survived these conditions in other years.

8. Some capricious and dark human act is at the heart of the matter. Unlikely! A la Deliverance—No.

(Much later in the day) I've decided—maybe with the raven's help, maybe not—that the group has been found. Maybe they made Lookout Point in 3 days and, rather than sit there for 5 days, decided to press on. It's *very* unlikely for Pelly to do such a thing and not leave notice with someone. He, as much as anybody, should know the consequences of missing a rendezvous. BUT besides Hornby's ghost emerging, there no other explanation. Given the events of the last 12 hours—the Turbo-Beaver returning west at high altitude, I have a strong feeling that they have been found. If they have, I bet Pelly is hopping mad that he had to be searched for and I bet there will be hell to pay by whomever picked up the tab for all that flying!

One of the safety concessions to travelling alone in the area of the Sanctuary which has the highest density of barrenground grizzly bears was taking a 50 calibre, eight shot, pump-action shotgun. Although trained in gun safety and familiar with target shooting, and perhaps because I was still a little twitchy about the missing film crew, the firearm itself made me more nervous in the field about the gun than about the prospect of being approached by an unfriendly bear. This led to an entry which provided some interesting clues about respect for the land:

A Meditation on the Winchester Portable Cannon

Having portable artillery along makes for some interesting speculation in the wee hours of twilight. After that stupid caribou trotted past the tent the other night, brushing the guy wires, I took out the cannon, got rid of the first buckshot shell, loaded the other from the magazine into the breech, leaving four slugs on deck. And there I lay, pondering the possibilities.

So some half-starved, half-crazed grizzly stumbles along—a bear with a taste for M&M peanuts (I'd taken gorp to the tent last night because the bugs were so bad, temporarily forgetting the no food in the tent rule) and human flesh, an unrequited taste for plump juicy human flesh.

So the bear stands outside the tent and says, "Okay whiteboy, come out with your hands up, and bring those M&Ms!" Knowing there is safety behind two layers of ripstop nylon (SURE!) I yell out bravely, "You can have the M&Ms, but I'm not leaving the tent."

There is a long pause. I hear the bear pacing in the gravel and pinging his claws on the taut guy lines. Obviously, he's thinking. A good sign.

"Are they peanut M&Ms?" he asks.

"Yes, my favourite. You can have them all."

"I *hate* peanut M&Ms. I guess I'll have to eat you instead."

At that point I cock the rifle and say (click—click), "Look Mr. Bear, why don't you just move along and find somebody else to pillage."

"Nothing doing, I'm coming in."

At that point, the scimitar claws slice through the fabric in parallel slits. I point the gun and fire, right through the tent, missing the bear altogether, but scaring him off. Through the shredded side of the tent, I see him running away.

The next hour, an incredible 3-day storm comes with rain and hail and wind. The tent, totally unrepairable from the shotgun blast is unable to keep me from the elements. I die of exposure.

*****

I've been on two riverside muskoxen (MO) skulks today. The first one was just across the river from our closest MO encounter in '83. There were five or six MOs, mostly males, sleeping and grazing in the willows. I drifted right up to them. When they realized they had company, they all looked. The smaller ones then moseyed up the bank a bit while a big crusty old male with only one eye stared at me (now on the beach) and let out a most intimidating growl—never heard anything like it (except maybe in movies about Africa). Pretty scary stuff. That's when the sweat began to run. I assured his lordship that I wasn't half as stupid as he might think, so I graciously retired to the canoe. Pondering the situation for a moment or two, while the whole crew disappeared into the alders, I decided to skirt around and have a look through the binos. That I did, and from a good distance too. As soon as I was set, I got out the binos and there, staring back at me was his Lordship. Another growl, this time with extra volume to give effect over greater distance. It worked. I was out of there. ... I was quite sure that an old fighter with one eye and as impressive a grunt as his would not let a few shoulder high alder bushes get in the way of butting a curious tourist into oblivion.

On a separate topic, I've been thinking all day about land-as-teacher and all that PhD stuff. I had a thought ... Out here, with only the devices you carry with you at hand, the changing land and the conditions it presents certainly makes one pay attention to the circumstances of one's life. Maybe *paying attention* is part of what the Chipewyans mean by "respect."

CAMP 3 (km 428) THERE IS A CHANCE THAT THIS MIGHT BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD. I'm sitting on a promontory at a sweeping bend in the river a couple of kilometres onto the Beverly Lake sheet. Capped by a horizon-to-horizon cloudless sky, in the NW is the setting sun. Before me, to the west, is a bed of low heath tundra—billberry, crowberry, and labrador tea, not one plant higher than two inches off the ground—each leaf, each blade, each nuance of texture and natural design shadowed and highlighted by the low angle of the sun. Beyond that, on a bluff high above the river, is the tent, taut, blue and inviting (a refuge from the bugs that insist on joining the journal keeping session). And disappearing in the distance beyond the tent is a magnificent curving sweep of the river, this bank steady and treed in the distance; the other bank broken by a rocky point and a grassy point which set off the sun-lit sandy bluffs in the distance. To the south, across circles of jumping fish on smooth sinewy monochromatic metallic water is a scape with trees and tundra reaching to a ridge, perhaps 20 miles away. Behind me, the edge of the hill and beyond that, to the east another view that is as varied and patterned and colourful as every other vista from this place. The air is still and smells like tundra piquant, sweet, musty all wrapped into one distinctive smell—tundra—that's what the smell is, tundra. There's nothing like it.

What a place this is. Loneliness is turning slowly to aloneness, a much more productive state of mind. Time on the land has given fear a chance to fortify itself with knowledge of what happens out here. I'm sure the film crew business didn't help the mind settle in, but today it's starting to happen. Instead of being afraid that Tundra Tom might not show at Beverly Lake, today, for a while, I thought how nice that might be to paddle all the way to Baker Lake. Nice, but I'm still counting on him showing up.

As George Lovell might say, "The boogs in this tent are disgustin'." It's a good thing all the little buggers belong to the same religious organization, that preaches "when in a tent, present yourself to the lightest fabric in the place." I've just had a couple of quick flails, and already you can smell that oily, fishy smell of dead bugs. Outside is a madhouse. Inside, though the situation is better, I attempt to murder each and every one of these interlopers. Outside, it sounds like persistent light rain. I see some of the more adventuresome little soldiers have set up a MASH unit in the corner by my Thermarest [sleeping mat]. I see wounded black flies parading around with single crutches and large field dressings on their heads. Geesus! I'm in a war zone. That's means all's fair. To the Front! Die, you bastards!

One of the many sounds you hear out here, in the absence of human conversation, is the constant chatter of birds. Walking a beach, there are the pizzicato peeps of plovers and yellowlegs and terns, whose territory you're invading. In the high growth willow and alder there are other sounds, mostly fluttering as passerine species draw attention from their nests by flying away. And up on the open tundra there is the constant and delicate sweet-sweet-sweet of the little birds that make that place home. Occasionally, I'm sure, simply walking allows a predatory bird, like a jaeger or a gull to raid an unprotected nest, but that—short of staying away from here, is unavoidable. There are robins here and various sparrows we see in the winter, both of which link here to there, north to south, visiting place to home. The geese too, do that, but in a different way. This place, in its own way, in its own time, belongs to the geese.

Whoosh—Got soundly blown off the river. The wind had been following and building all day, but I had stuck to the lee shore and done okay. However, right at the corner where the river swings from NE from N (just before the island that splits the river before Ursus Island) I decided to take the inside of the corner which meant crossing the river. The effects of current, corner, bluffs and wind made for a crossing that increasingly caught my attention. It was one of those crossings for which you'd wished the camera cases were closed.

It was weird pulling up onto this beach where I've been for the last four hours. The first thing I did on landing was pull the boat well up on shore and go for a swim. Although the wind was blowing sand with force enough to etch glass, the sun was out and it was warm (And I'd worked up quite a sweat getting here.) The weird part came when I realized that there were recent footprints in the sand beside mine. They looked small, like a woman's, perhaps belonging to the group from East Wind Arctic Tours we saw from the air before landing. I've been following tracks on every beach, on every bar of sand and pat of mud since being dropped on the river. They tell a lot. Who was here. How big they were. Who they were with. How fast they were going. In what direction they were going and something about what they were doing at the time. These small human prints led into the water, right where I intended to swim. Good spot. But I kept looking up to see who was watching. There's something intimate about shoeless footprints in wet sand. A very personal and private moment for the printer, that lasts as long as the sky and water allow.

This evening turned out to be a visual and sensory feast. (see Figure 5 on page 180) After a good rest and a wash at the windbound site, I set out as the wind was starting to subside. As the sun got lower and moved into the northwest, the river got calmer and calmer, finally reaching a surface of oiled glass. Everything was completely still, except for the cries of terns and other birds on the shore. At one point, I drifted past a group of young geese. They had fledged but their honkers sounded pre-pubescent. They made the oddest hoarse squawk I've ever heard from a goose. Later, drifting again, a white bird on the water ahead caught my attention. Thinking it was a gull, I watched to see what it would do, and who would fly out from shore to have a scrap. After a while, I decided that it was acting very strangely for a gull, just paddling around. Binos revealed that it was a tundra swan—a beauty.

For the last hour or so I've been sitting on a bluff well away from the river just watching the world go by. A lone caribou just about ran over me. And for the last while, I've been watching what looked for all the world like flying lessons for a young parasitic jaeger—two parents and one young one. The game looked like a cross between tag and follow-the-leader.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, to have the opportunity to do what I'm doing right now, but even at the best of times there's a kind of hollow ring to everything. At first it was a fearful ache in my stomach—the oh no, what happens if something happens and there's no one to help? But now the funny feeling is lack of close

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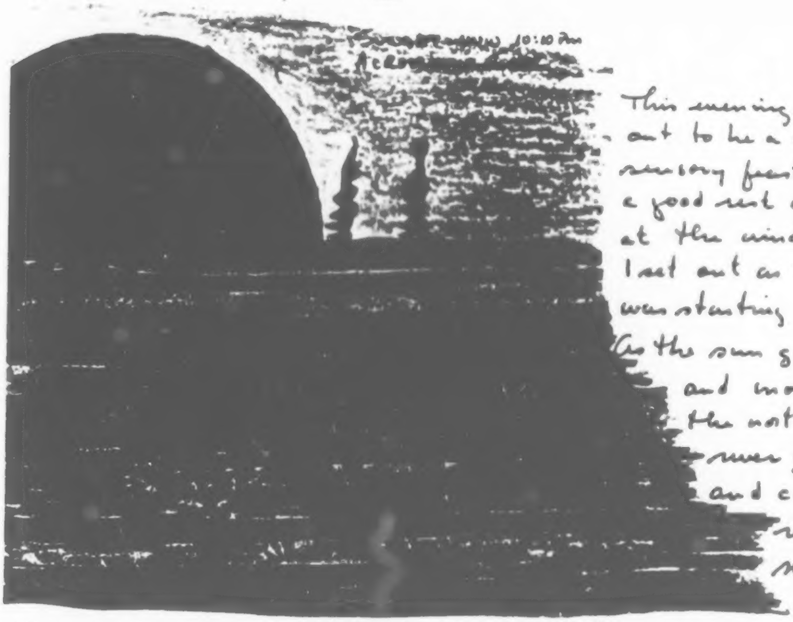

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Figure 5. The Thelon River—Looking NNW, 10:10 p.m.:

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company—to hold and to talk to and to share experiences. It's like being in a big house *full* of exciting things to do and to see, but being there alone. Sharing experience is an important element in living satisfaction. Here, you have to make up your mind what you think. You can't wait for another's reaction or talk about it for a while. For me, now, the pictures and the rocks and feathers and caribou hair and bones and sticks I'm gathering (for the Baker Lake Visitors Centre interactive display I've contracted to design) have a special importance, because these are the things that will connect others to the inexplicably rich adventuresome journey that is unfolding day by day. Actually, so much has happened that I'm pretty sure a book could be written entitled *A Lifetime in Nine Days*. It would be a book with nine chapters, one for each day that has gone by on this unbelievable solo. Each day has had a theme; each chapter would have a theme. There are so many little things you see and hear and feel on your own, and there is all that time to mull stuff over. I wonder if this is what a lone Inuit hunter, or white trapper, might go through in his mind? The power of this experience is certainly sufficient for such a book.

You'd love the *feel* of this place. All around there is life. Birds and coloured rocks and willows that give off just a hint of sweet jasmine. Warm dry air and clean water that tastes so good and quenches absolutely. This is a magical place—and I don't think it's me wishing it so. This place has things that hit home. Tonight, for example, I spied a cow caribou and a calf on the opposite shore (about 1 km away). I watched as the calf trotted along behind the mother. When the mother trotted into the water to swim to this shore, without one glimmer of hesitation, the calf followed. It followed her into a wealth of possible dangers, exhaustion, getting swept downstream, cold water—who knows what, but it followed her. For some reason watching that touched me. It really hit home, both the staggering responsibility of being a parent and the innocent trust of a young new being. Like in so many aspects of life up here, this vignette was elemental in its bearing, reduced to lowest terms—set out in a context where I could understand. What I saw so clearly was how trust and responsibility are not separate—one is dependent on the other. It's a very delicate balance. The sanctity of the bond between parent and offspring is empowered by trust and responsibility, but it is given life and magic by the balance. There are other such balances I'm sure.

One such balance is in the feathers that are littered all along the banks of this river. For the young geese, these shed feathers are a symbol of new life, of birth, of maturation and growth. For the adult goose, the moulted feathers symbolize the annual renewal that goes on here each summer. One set of flight feathers take a Thelon goose from here to, say, Big Bend National Park in Texas, and back, and whatever wear or damage that is sustained during that period—pieces missing from a hunter's stray shot—those feathers are shed and new ones grow. Interesting that the flightless period is at exactly the same time in the annual cycle when the young geese are also flightless. The young geese shed their down and their feathers of adolescence and the adult geese shed their primary flight feathers. They do so in harmony with one another, in some great plan. They wait together until they both can fly. Meanwhile in great numbers they live and feed on the shores of this northern river and leave the feathers as evidence of their passing, as placeholders on a beach that will be washed clean by the spring freshet. That too is a kind of balance.

Thelon Bluffs: I must report tonight on another encounter of the kind that raises one's blood pressure. This time it was with a thunderstorm and a muskox—at the same time! This weather system seems to be the result of a stalled, or *very* slow moving cold front. When the fog lifted today (about 10:30 a.m.) it revealed another spectacular line of thunder heads on the western horizon Far away thunder was a feature of the day.

Once mobile again, I read and sat and walked with muskoxen and floated and generally did what I could to soak up the countryside. However, approaching Thelon Bluffs, the sky behind was almost completely black, so I pulled over immediately. It was not a good camping spot so after deciding that nothing was going to happen in the time it would take to shoot the rapids in the big curve at Thelon Bluffs, I put on my PFD (for the first time) and headed out.

I stopped again below the first rapid to have another look at the sky. It looked still ominous, but far enough away still to keep us (the canoe and me) out of the rain. So on we went. Rounding the second big bend in the Bluffs, my mind was taken off paddling and put into photography mode by a family (> 15) MOs *right* on the bank. Got some good pictures against the black sky and then spied a likely looking camp spot at the next corner. It was time to hurry, the blackness was almost overhead.

So I crashed the canoe into the rocky bank and took the tent and rummaged around for a flat spot that had some wind protection from the alders. Found one. Rolled out the tent. And was just thinking "Now's the time to see how fast this tent can be put up ..." when a deep low growl came from *right* behind me. I turned with a start and saw nothing. It growled again. And I thought ... FLEE, YOU IDIOT! GO FOR THE GUN! So with poles in hand I scrambled like a terrified (and clumsy) rabbit the heck out of there. Still I could see nothing in the vincinty of the tent spot. Whatever it was had disappeared into the alders. "Oh, great," I thought. "There's a thunder storm seconds away and my tent is in the purview and tender care of an unspecified wild animal! What NOW?"

Anxious to either get the tent and put it up, preferably both, I took the gun case and skirted around the gravel bar on the periphery of the alders. Eventually I saw the noise makers ... two large male MOs who by now had ambled off into a paddock a ways behind the alder grove. Whew It was not a bear!

Went into the water gauging station on the lower river today and found they have a visitor's log book. Some predictable comments about garbage from passing canoeists. The entry that most intrigued me was by one of the water survey workers who was here on the 8th of June this year. "Water at the doorstep," he wrote. What intrigued me was that there was a major embankment between that same step and where the canoe was today. It had to be a difference in water level of at least 20 feet! He made some notes about his calculations on water volume and concluded by saying that the amount of water flowing in the Thelon River that day was probably the 1-in-100-year flood and that it was equivalent to *80* semi-truck loads of water passing *every second.* Awesome!

Tomorrow the plan is to push to Beverly Lake and await pickup the next day. The $64 question is WILL TUNDRA TOM SHOW? WILL HE HAVE HIS "JUG" FIXED? OR WILL HE HAVE MADE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS TO HONOUR HIS OBLIGATIONS? My bet is that he will show. When he learned during our negotiations that I was doing a story on the research for *Equinox*, he seemed pretty anxious to talk. I have a feeling he's going to give me an earful about publicizing this place, but whatever he has to say, I'm betting that he'll find a way to be here to say it. If not ... I guess other arrangements and plans will have to be made. Let's snowshoe across that bog when we get to it.

(next day) There is no denying that what's been pressing on my mind lately is the pickup. It's a little hairy thinking that I'm relying on one man's word, a couple of phone calls, a fax from the ESSO station in South River on the way into the cabin, and the hope that everything will work out okay. The prospect of *not* getting picked up hangs as darkly in the east as the thunder clouds did last night.

Last night was not a great night. I woke up with a start at 2:30 a.m., having been, I think stung by a bee or a wasp behind my right ear. This, the dark gloomy light, and creeping cold, precipitated that awful panicky feeling again. I don't know what it is. All I know is I felt it on a winter solo when I woke up in the dark and cold, in a snow trench, *really* thirsty with nothing to drink. And I felt it 100X more out with Noel and Antoine and the boys last spring. Anyway, the night passed, the weather cleared a bit and it felt good to move again.

(next day) This hasn't been the most enjoyable trip I've been on by far, but it may have been the most productive. I came here to ground my PhD study in personal experience in the Sanctuary and to photograph the Sanctuary in summer for my *Equinox* piece. I feel *great* about spending this time here—done my time in the wild northern archive, as it were. There will be a lot of sifting and sorting yet to do, but I know that this time alone in the Sanctuary will be a guiding force in those deliberations. I just hope Tundra Tom will show before too long. The prospect of paddling the next 200 miles to Baker Lake doesn't thrill me too much, and I don't know if there's enough food to do that extra bit.

(next day) A beautiful morning. Still air, clear sky—a good day for flying ... eh Tundra Tom?

4:40 p.m. NO PLANE.

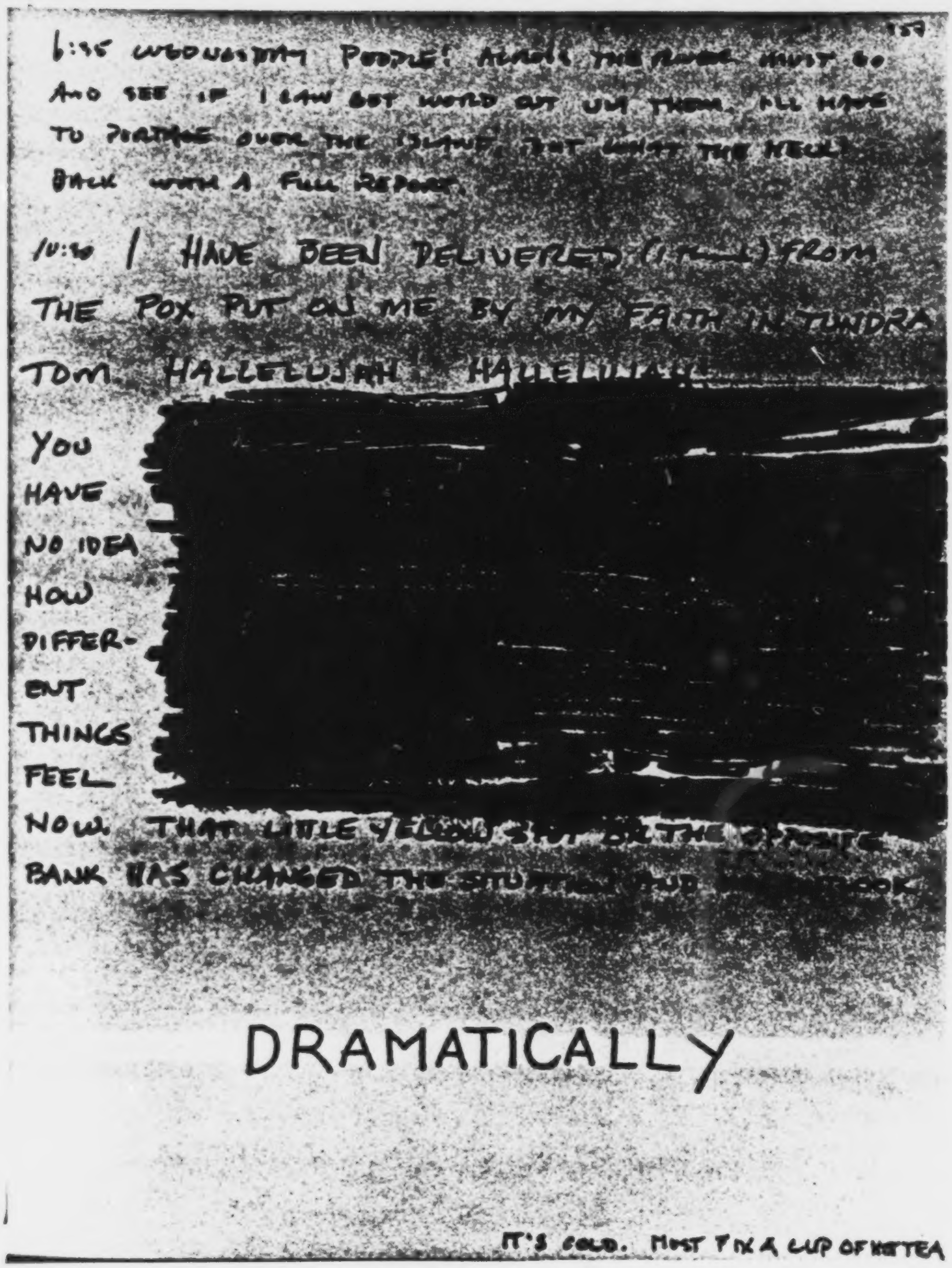
I've decided to give him today and tomorrow before setting out by canoe for Schultz Lake Lodge. There's probably enough food and provided the weather cooperates, I could probably to that 200 km in maybe seven days. The provisions would be tight.

I'm resigned to the waiting, and the long paddle, if it comes to that. What makes my stomach sick is any undue worry you might encounter on account of well-meaning but scantily informed authorities, should I become overdue.

So the trip that began with speculation about missing people (the film crew) is ending with speculation about missing people, only now, one of those missing people will be me.

I'm not officially overdue with the RCMP until a week from today. Hopefully if something else doesn't happen in the meantime, I'll be able to get word to you before that, that I'm okay. For your sake and mine, I hope Tom, or somebody, shows up here in the next 24 hours.

The time dragged on as I waited for Tundra Tom. I walked loops of ever-increasing diameter away from the tent to pass the time, but always staying in sight of the tent. For some reason, unlike all of the other long hikes I'd done away from the river, there was an inexorable sense of panic that welled up as soon as I was alone on the tundra and out of sight of either the canoe or the tent—out of sight of the known. The uncertainty gnawed away. What bothered me most was not the fact that I would be left out on the tundra, because I had enough food to last me for a hasty seven day paddle to a lodge 200 km to the east, and if that was unoccupied, I could probably have made it all the way to the community of Baker Lake. What bothered me most was that I had filed a trip plan with the RCMP and this unexpected extra bit of paddling was going to make me overdue according to that plan. Dutifully the police would probably call my wife on the prescribed day to say that I had not turned up in Baker Lake, giving her an opportunity to think the worst had happened. Figure 6 on page 185 illustrates the journal reaction to spying a tiny yellow tent away across on the other shore of the river. A tent that revealed two biologists who had a chartered plane coming in the following day—a plane on which I was able to hitchhike a ride, not to Baker Lake as originally planned but back to Yellowknife, but given the circumstances, I was glad to be anywhere where I was no longer dependent on Tundra Tom. I was *ready* to leave



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6:35 WEDNESDAY PUDDLE! ACROSS THE RIVER MUST GO AND SEE IF I CAN GET WORD OUT ON THEM. I'LL HAVE TO PORTAGE OVER THE ISLAND, BUT WHAT THE HECK! BACK WITH A FULL REPORT.

10:30 I HAVE BEEN DELIVERED (I think) FROM THE POX PUT ON ME BY MY FAITH IN TUNDRA TOM. HALLELUJAH. HALLELUJAH.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW DIFFER-ENT THINGS FEEL [redacted] NOW. THAT LITTLE YELLOW SPOT ON THE OPPOSITE BANK HAS CHANGED THE SITUATION AND [illegible] OUTLOOK.

DRAMATICALLY

IT'S COLD. MUST FIX A CUP OF HOT TEA

Figure 6. An Evening to Remember: A tent on the far shore brings relief from a pressing problem.

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the field. The evening prior to departure, after I had spoken to the biologists, I hunkered down in the tent for the last time and wrote:

IT HAS BEEN A HARROWING DAY.

IT HAS BEEN A HARROWING TRIP.

IT HAS BEEN A HARROWING YEAR.

TIME FOR SOME HARROWING IN THE FIELDS CLOSE TO HOME!

I'M TIRED OF UNCERTAINTY, ESPECIALLY THE KIND ON WHICH LIVES AND WELL-BEING DEPEND.

But in the meantime, I think I have just had the most informative 24 continuous hours of research into how land acts as teacher. Time to get to Baker Lake and get home and write this thing up. And maybe holiday or spend next summer's break in the Maritimes, or at Bruce Beach, or maybe someplace exotic ... like home.

Euro-Canadian Voices

Art Historian Marie Bouchard

Baker Lake resident Marie Bouchard moved to the community in 1986, after completing a Master's degree specializing in Inuit art,[61] to research and write a book about the the starvation of the Caribou Inuit on the Back River in the late 1950s. Among other enterprises in town, Marie set up a sewing shop and store, and was instrumental in establishing the Baker Lake Historical Society. I spoke to her in her home, in a spare moment in her role as head chef for a crew of family and friends from the south who were building the family a new house across town. Her insights into Inuit relationships to spirituality and space were particularly interesting.

> I think that even by 1957-58 the Inuit were desperate, but even in the '20's when Rasmussen came through, they were struggling too. When I read Rasmussen material I thought to myself, gee you know, if it is true that amulets were powerful and that the Inuit's beliefs were still so untouched, why were they giving things to him so willingly. Like he walked out of here with a ton of stuff. And you know, if just never really made sense to to me, why they were so forthcoming with him and so free with the information, free with their amulets, handing them away. And I do believe that by the time Rasmussen came that the Inuit were already starting to lose faith in their belief system, like in the Shamanic belief system, in the caribou themselves, like in that whole cycle, because they had been starving for years before that too. So I think by the late 1920's that their belief system was already breaking down. It became worse in the '30's and '40's because they had long periods of starvation, and I think by the late '50's they had just given up and so, the Inuit are very quick to adapt to anything that comes along, and the white person came along and said, look we have the solution, and they just went with it. Because it doesn't make sense for a people who can survive for so long and be self- reliant to all of a sudden give up and give

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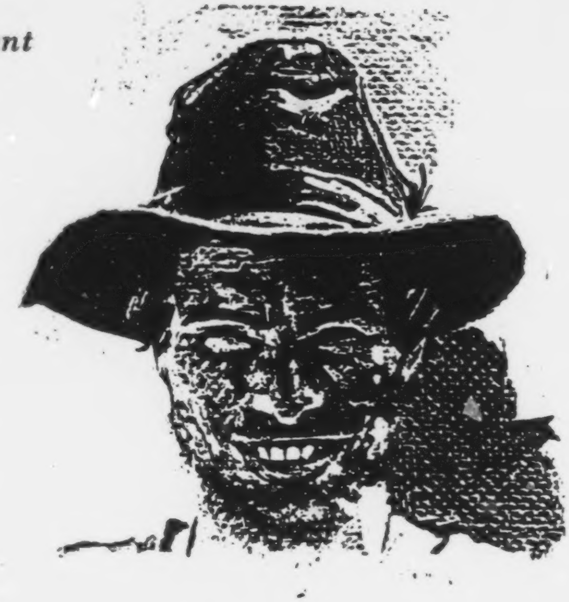
[61] Marie helped put together a lifetime retrospective of the art of Jesse Oonark, perhaps the best known artist from Baker Lake, for her Master's degree. Doing the research for this show, she came across documentation of the starvation camps of the 1950s in which many Caribou Inuit died.

up so quickly. And most of the people I interviewed confirmed that, because they said, well you know we thought somebody would come and help us. It wouldn't occur, well I shouldn't say it wouldn't occur to them, but walking to Baker Lake was almost out of the question because it was so far and they were so weak, they had no dogs, they would have had to literally walk here, and they had been rescued in the past or someone at least had come along, either a Roman Catholic priest or else an RCMP officer had come along on their rounds, or if they sent word through, if somebody did make it to Baker Lake bringing word that people were starving, help would always come. So they were really quite ready I think by the late '50's for a change. They were willing to accept it, reluctantly, but they did accept it.

The way the Inuit respond to land is very much the way a farmer responds to land. I mean I'm from the prairies and so, and I grew up on a farm and we used to rely on the land for our food and if you didn't have a good crop you didn't get new winter clothes, or you didn't have a vehicle or whatever. I mean everything was tied in very closely with the land and what it produced and it, you know, it's the same thing for them but even on a more important, or on a higher level. But everything, like their language, is based on the land, they relate to space where we relate to time. There's all these elements that come out of it. Their whole language is based, I don't know if John has explained a little bit to you, but their whole language is based on space, the environment. We might say I see three caribou over there. They'll actually describe, in minute detail, where the caribou are, are they standing still or moving, are they male or female, I mean, they would never just say there are three caribou over there. They will give you a whole description of the entire scenario. And you see that in their art work too. That relationship to space is very, it's a very intimate relationship rather than a relationship to time. I think the most basic thing is how they relate to paper, because paper is a flat space, it's a two-dimensional space, and unlike us, where we always try to work that two-dimensional space to make it look three-dimensional—the original artists like Oonark and the Inuit who first tried making art approached their piece of paper as a two-dimensional space. They didn't try to warp it or change it or do anything. And so what you get in Oonark's work for example, is a very flat surface, there's, like this is a younger artist and you can see how she has tried to build up the space by layering her background and her musk ox they change in scale, and the same with the—she's made a little narrative scene, but Oonark for example, would never do anything, it would never even occur her to do something like that. It didn't matter, because what they were putting down was how they saw the world and they didn't try to change the surface of the paper. Again it's that knowledge of their environment and their relationship to space rather than to time. This sets the scene in time rather than in space. Like with the sun, like this looks like a summer scene with the tundra with the different colours of the tundra and the fact that the musk oxen are grazing and you can see probably the mothers with their young calves. Like she's linking it to time rather than to space. Like if Oonark wanted to depict musk oxen, they would simply put the musk oxen and not create any kind background. They never had a background on it, they would just have the image. And also, what they would do was put multiple perspectives, like for example, used to dry on the floor, he would sit on the floor and he'd take his paper like this, say he's doing musk oxen, and he'd draw one here and he'd turn the paper around and he'd draw one here, and he'd just keep going around and fill the whole space.

But you can see with Martha, she's a younger artist and she's been exposed to perspective and southern culture and so, she had that, an horizon line in her work. You never, ever find that with the original Inuit artists, they just wouldn't do it.

Canoeists Kevin Goik & Tom Dent



The first people I interviewed on tape in Baker Lake was a pair of English adventurers who had canoed from Yellowknife to Lutsel K'e and then, after a short air lift, from Lynx Lake to Baker Lake along the Thelon from source to tidal outflow. Tom Dent (right), a young (mid 20s) radio-ecologist, and Kevin Goik, a management consultant in his late 20s or early 30s, both from Cumbria in the north of England, had flown to Canada, bought their whole canoeing kit and left Yellowknife bound for Baker Lake in early June. Their plan was to paddle to Snowdrift, to ascend the Snowdrift River to Whitefish Lake, from where they would get into Lynx Lake, the headwaters of the Thelon River. Much like the two dog mushers who arrived in Snowdrift from Minnesota on the advice of Indians along the way, Tom and Kevin were told in no uncertain terms by former chief Felix Lockhart and others in Lutsel K'e that they would be foolish to try paddling up the Snowdrift River. Their two other options, they were told, were to access the Barrens via Pike's Portage and Artillery Lake, or to fly to Whitefish Lake. The only problem was that they only had, between them, $350. The quote from Air Tindi in Yellowknife for a plane to fly them from Snowdrift to Whitefish Lake was $1100. They hung around Lutsel K'e talking to every floatplane pilot who arrived to see if they could get a cheaper ride to their destination. In the meantime, they spoke to people in Lutsel K'e and go to know some of the consultants and friends from my spring trip there. On the advice of the Chipewyan people in Lutsel K'e, Tom bought an old .303 rifle for $100 to protect them from bears. Eventually an American prospector based in Lutsel K'e flew them to a lodge on Whitefish Lake for $350.

They were dropped at a log lodge operated by Tom Faess. They reported to me that the first thing Faess did was to offer to help them on their way by flying them to the other end of Whitefish Lake in his Cessna 185. They declined, saying that the whole idea of their trip was to paddle, and that one flight was enough for them. Faess got more insistent. They told me Faess said, "Look, I've got people coming here who think they are coming to the middle of the wilderness and the last thing they want to see is a couple of Limeys sitting waving to them from up on the hill!" Instead of being transported out of the area of the Whitefish Lake lodge, Dent and Goik were put to work building a small addition on a cabin at the site for which they were given food and lodging for a week and $200 each. By their account, Dent and Goik were the toast of the guests, and at the end of the week, the owner asked if they would like to work as guides for his operation. They declined again, and set out for Baker Lake.

In many ways, Kevin and Tom represent the archetype of first-time canoeists down the the Thelon in search of adventure in the style of the old British explorers. For them, running into other people and other airplanes (similar to the one they had used to access the river) compromised their wilderness illusion. They wanted to be in a vast, uninhabited and perhaps even uninhabit*able* land to play out their dream for the place. Beyond the adventuresome challenges of the weather and the remoteness of the location, these men seemed relatively unmoved by the land itself.

I read their words as "typical" (if such generalization is possible) of adventure-seeking canoeists. Excerpts of our conversation follow:

Tom: We just picked a river off the map more or less. We used an atlas of Canada. Just opened it up and looked at the big blue lines. We looked at a map of where the tree line cut across here, and so expected the Thelon to be out in the barrens. We didn't take a stove. We relied on the driftwood. We knew for a fact that virtually all the way down the Thelon you could cook with driftwood fires. So that's why we decided not to bring a stove.

Kevin: Except for Beverly Lake, the last three lakes, Beverly, and the final part of the Thelon there's nothing, so we collected driftwood at Beverly Lake and carried it.

Tom: I'm definitely a tree person. That's the thing. The first part of the trip of the trip at Whitefish Lake I found when you're out on the barrens with nothing but the wind howling, that sort of puts the willies up your back. And when you see this little oasis of trees appear it's like home, you head for those. When you poke your nose out of the trees and come on to the barren lands it's quite intimidating, it's really stark, and maybe that's just the result of being brought up in the English wooded landscape, but I really feel, I'm probably more like a Dene than an Inuit in that respect. I can understand fully how the Dene didn't like to go out of the trees.

Kevin: Well, I think it's half and half. I really like the trees because of the wildlife that can shelter them, I think you see much more wildlife, it's concentrated around that oasis, and particularly the eskers, I mean they really give you, it's a wonderful landscape to look across all the different eskers, they just break up everything, it's just amazing. I just find, well, I can't really explain, you know, being stood on the top and looking down at the miles. It's just really a wonderful site, and it's a great feeling to be on them. But also, like the real — open barren lands, you know. I felt perhaps a little claustrophobic in the trees, but once you get out on the open barrens you can just see for miles, and I felt a great deal more freedom looking out across the barren land. Much more open landscape. And I wouldn't like to say one was better than the other, I think both so different and that they're unique in their own ways. And I'm glad, you know, the river actually flowed through the two different landscapes if you like.

Yeah, I definitely think it's a river of sort of three moods if you like. The upper region down to the Hanbury junction which is really esker country, I would say the majority of all the esker systems run, and you just get these clumps of trees, spruce and tamarack, is it, I think, and growing around these eskers regions and it's really wonderful country, because it's a mixture of trees around the eskers and then the open barren lands around that. And then you come down into the oasis itself, what I would say is the oasis between the Hanbury Junction and Lookout Point.

Tom: We wanted to experience something totally different from England really. In a way it sort of like when you're young, I mean I spent a lot of my youth reading the accounts of the old explorers and the hardships they went through, and I suppose when you're sort of quite youthful there's a certain amount of desire in you to sort of go through that, you think, well, those guys like Davis went through hell, do you think maybe if I put myself in the same situation I can hack it as well as they did, or as better as they did. When we was bitten by bugs and I quite enjoyed that bit myself, getting down to the nitty-gritty of things, our lives are so easy at the moment, you know, how many people could put themselves in that situation and get out the other end. No, I don't think we could ever go back to the days when these guys, oh we had dehydrated food, we had a really good canoe. I mean imagine doing the Thelon in a birch bark canoe or a wooden canoe. That would be something.

I was a bit disappointed in meeting tourists. The first person we talked to after moving out of Snowdrift we got talked in to a cabin on Whitefish Lake which was the base for a tourist's company up there who run trips down the Thelon and they have a leisure base camp up there from which they run little excursions into the barren lands, that was the first place we bumped in to, and we were probably a week ten days down the Thelon when we bumped into another wilderness canoe excursion run by Alex Hall from Canoe Arctic out of Fort Smith, and that was the biggest surprise of all, because I fully expected to meet canoe trips down the oasis on the lower Thelon, but the upper Thelon is an area of quite fast water, and a hell of a lot of rapids, and lo and behold we bumped into a group there. So that was the biggest surprise of all because there you are trying to get a really crude wilderness experience, you're throwing yourself into the deep end, you want to compare yourself with all these guys who went down there before, and you come around the corner and old granny's doing exactly the same thing you are. Oh, they've had it a bit easier, they've been flown in and have all their food provided, but it takes a bit away from the thing.

Kevin: And, so there were young couples, there were middle aged guys from New York, computer software experts, plus the people who would love to do this thing, but who haven't got the knowhow or the confidence to go out and do it alone, so in that respect it's good for them. And a couple of old retired people who just thought, hey I want to do something a bit more exciting. But I was well impressed with him because he was doing some grade two white water with them. He wouldn't get them out and take them along the side of the river and show them, well this is what you have to do, there's that rapid, there you go. What he'd do is he'd take them mother duck fashion. They'd hear the white water rumbling and he'd get them all together and say, right, follow me, here we go, and he'd just sort of shoot them down before they had time to get too scared and I was right impressed with that. That was what was quite strange, because they would keep the same time as us, I mean, but every time we came to a rapid we had to get out and scout it, and so they had to keep to the same time but they had a guide who could whiz them straight through without thinking. And right at the very end of the day they'd be saying, hey, we think, oh crikey look, we've paddled, we've had a really hard day, we've paddled say 35 km., and these old people are keeping up, we were—shocked to say the least.

Tom: I hated it. The thought there was someone else just round the corner. Yeah, I really didn't like it. I wanted to paddle away straight away. Didn't want to meet again. That's what got to me. The fact that you put all that effort into getting to that spot and yet anyone could get to the same spot with a minimum of effort. The thing I've decided on this whole trip is that I hate float planes. Hate them with a passion, because there's no wilderness left. People may use the word wilderness, but there isn't any left at all. When you've got a float plane you can just hop it and land anywhere you like. If you're ninety years old, as long as you can fly a plane you can get to the same spot where someone took six months a hundred years ago, through pain and hell and starvation, and all sorts of deprivations to get to that spot, you can bump into a ninety year old grandmother from Minnesota. As long as she's got a certain amount of money. We bumped into two more tourist groups who'd been flown in—they were just flown in, they were going to be flown out. We bumped in to two sports fishermen, again from Minnesota, who had just decided on a lake and, just fly straight in and land where you like, put your tent up.

Kevin: The land, the actual land, has taught me travelling through it, that yet it's there for everybody, it doesn't belong to anybody in particular, or belong to a nation or whatever, it should be there for anybody who wants to travel, who wants to live there, but they've got to realize that conservation is part of that living and travelling. It's got to be there for future generations. It's something that's kind of emerged when you perhaps sit in some of those special places along the way and things, well yeah, this is absolutely wonderful and perhaps, you know, I'm seeing this and wouldn't it be nice for other people to come along see this too and take that experience away, but to leave it as it is for other people. One of those special places was when we slept on some of the eskers. A particular one which Samuel Hearne visited up on Lynx Lake., It's to me, an absolutely wonderful esker. It's an island, big L-shaped esker, and to sit on top of that and look along it is just an amazing experience. And one or two of the other big eskers systems on the Upper Thelon.

Kevin: And another tremendous place for me was to actually visit Hornby's cabin. It was just such an atmospheric place, although there's very little left there nowadays, just so atmospheric, and when a musk ox appeared over the rise behind the cabin at the same time, you think Christ there's this animal there and if it appeared when Hornby had been there he'd been able to survive, but it just didn't. And you think, well hell, this is. It was just so atmospheric, it was just one of those moments where you stood there looking at the graves of the dead bodies, the ruined cabin and all of a sudden a musk ox appears just above the cabin out in the trees, and having read about Hornby's journey and that time of starvation, where they were doing their upmost to survive, but just couldn't do it.

The feeling in the Thelon is different, totally, I can't really explain what that it, but it certainly a lot different. Because I just feel it's probably less people, there's less settlements, less people. Down the Mackenzie there were settlements every few hundred miles, and that was a very much different kind of trip and we got a lot closer to the people on that trip. Because we met so many of them, and talked to so many and we're invited to their camps and whatever, to talk and drink coffee and fish, and whatever. There's nobody, no camps out there.

Tom: This is how this place was thousands of years ago, and when you see musk ox you half expect to go around the corner and see a woolly rhino. You did get the feeling this is what the barren lands of Canada were like thousands of years ago.

Pilot and Outfitter Tom Faess

My first contact with Thomas H. Faess, pilot and owner of East Wind Arctic Tours & Outfitters Ltd., was by phone. He agreed to pick me up at the end of my solo trip on the Thelon River that was part of this research. For a series of complicated reasons, he never did pick me up. As a result I was very keen to speak with him when I eventually did get to Baker Lake by other means. He turned up in Baker Lake about a week after the day of our planned rendezvous and we spoke.

Faess turned out to be a almost a caricature of the free-wheeling, hard living northern bush-pilot-cum-outfitter—a good story teller and not bothered by hyperbole. Sorting out fact from wishful thinking or plain blarney in what he had to say was difficult; nevertheless, he is one of two licenced non-native outfitters on the Thelon River and as such an important contact. Early on in our conversation, he said that he had been out on the Thelon with his dog for 17 years and that he had spent an average of six months in each of those years "on the Thelon." In those years, he told me, he'd done 36 descents of the river, but only four were "full Thelon trips." Between times on the Thelon or at his lodge on Lynx Lake (or now on Whitefish Lake, since he "sold" the Lynx Lake operation), he told me about driving a propane truck in Yellowknife and being out of Yellowknife three or four months a year marketing the company in places like Los Angeles and Chicago. He got his first outfitting licence in 1975 and operated with his father out of Lynx Tundra Lodge on Lynx Lake. At first they offered mostly fishing trips. In 1982, he told me, he started running canoe trips out of Lynx Tundra Lodge and in 1984 "made the decision I was going to switch completely over to being a wilderness adventure conservation education oriented outfit." In 1985, East Wind Arctic Tours and

Outfitters was born. In a letter from Faess dated 21 November 1991 he let me know that East Wind was folding and that he was in the process, from his new base in New Denver, British Columbia, of starting up a new outfitting company called *Great Canadian Ecoventures*.[62] He has come a long way from the kid who started out working underground in the gold mines near Red Lake, Ontario! He had lots to say about how much he'd travelled the land, how few people he'd seen, and about the commodification of spiritual values of wilderness.

> I've been watching the land claims process take place in the territories and how the Thelon has become an issue. And during land claim selections how both the Inuit and the Dene have made claim to the Thelon as their own, and it causes suspicion because I have been out on the Thelon River, like I said, with my dog for 17 years, and I've spent on the average of 6 months a year on the Thelon since that time, since 1969. I have never once, in all the years that I've been out there ever ran into anybody from either Snowdrift or from the communities around Great Slave Lake or for that matter, anybody from Baker Lake. Never. I've never run into one person. So they can make all the claims they want, they claim there's 150 cabins out there. I know where every existing cabin is in the whole Thelon area. I mean as a pilot that's a natural thing, I mean, and cabin sites are easy to find quite frankly, because they're all concentrated in a certain esker system— by the trees, and it's as simple as that. And the cabin sites that you do find out there are not Dene cabins, but the old barrenland trappers' cabins from the turn of the century up until the 1930's and so on that are from the white trappers that came into the country back then. People like Gus D'Aoust and his brothers, and there was a whole slew of trappers that trapped that land, and the concentration of Dene activity, I know exactly where it is pinpointed and it was not in the Thelon Game Sanctuary, there's no activity up around Dixon Canyon and as far as I know that country was avoided for centuries because there's no current sign up in that area even sign prior to the Sanctuary having existed outside of John Hornby's place. But however, there is an old Dene settlement on not far from Whitefish Lake and there's also another one just off the shore of Artillery Lake. Both of these were kind of hidden settlements, but I managed to find them in my years of hiking around out there. The furthest outlying trappers now are white trappers, even still, and not Dene and that's why when I hear the claim to the land, I mean it's you can walk the country and I know where there's Dene graves laying out there and I think everybody has a right to a heritage to a certain extent, but the Thelon, from the concentrates of activity that you find around this perimeter is very obvious that it's Dene country to the west of the Thelon and it's Inuit country to the

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[62] Which contained one of the great lines of this whole research project (and first slight admission of culpability in my being stranded on the tundra) "I apologize again for seeming to leave you abandoned on the shores of Beverly Lake."

east of the Thelon, by the concentrations in camps and stuff that you find, but when you're away from the Thelon Game Sanctuary is where you find the concentrates of those encampments from either end, and not within the Sanctuary. And I think, I find it interesting in land claim selection how they always manage to pick out critical areas, particularly the Dene. I wouldn't be able to speak about the Inuit perspective and that, but they've always selected critical areas like Contwoyto Lake, areas along the Back river which have shown high levels of mineral potential, and I can't help but think that under the name of heritage, that the Dene are selecting the Thelon Game Sanctuary, also because of its high mineral potential.

I can't pinpoint what it is that I love about the Thelon. It's many things. I mean it's just like a spirituality, if you will. I couldn't pin it on any one thing. I love the wildlife and I love the country and I love the changes that it goes through, but it's a feeling that I get. I mean I was raised in the bush anyways prior to coming to the territories. And the Thelon represented to me the perfect wilderness. The perfect last wilderness. I was a guide. That intrigued me. My father and grandfather were both guides and the last wilderness of course would appeal to me because it stood the potential of protecting the heritage of our family. But you know, that's just reasoning, spiritually that you can't really explain because it's the passion that drives you back there. That's why bankers hate me so much.

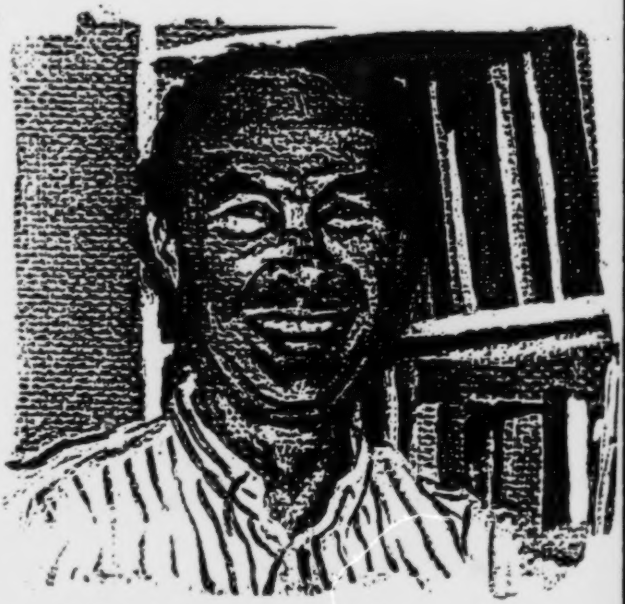
But it's not that I'm anti-mining. I worked underground in gold mines in the Red Lake area, and Northwestern Ontario, when I was younger and I paid, you know, put my way through flying school and whatnot by working in mines and I'm certainly not in a position to be anti-mining. What I am is *anti*-doing any kind of development, whether it be mining, whether it be increased uncontrolled tourism, whether it be any kind of boundary alteration, even management harvesting around the edges. What I am dead against is to see the Thelon Game Sanctuary altered because it represents such a perfect wilderness to me. Judging from the opinion of the people that I've brought through there in the last 15 years on canoe trips and on expeditions and back packing trips, that is the all over opinion of everybody I've ever taken there, is that it is far too valuable place from an international perspective, that kind of wilderness has become a precious commodity and not to be found elsewhere in the world. And that eventually, it's value will become, the value of the wilderness itself will far increase the value that any mining potential could on a long term.

It's the spirituality of being able to go into an accessible remote wilderness area, and the spirituality experience is the experience that has impressed itself most of all on all my past customers. I've, through every medium that I ever tried to sell the idea at, in staying honest in the sales, it's been impossible to describe the experience on paper or in photograph or, only the people that have been there and want to go back again and again and spread the word, that's where my real sales come. Well, the spirituality kind of comes of its own accord. And I think when any person coming from the clamour of downtown New York or Los Angeles or Chicago and getting dropped of in a place like the Thelon River or Kazan River and being, can't help being shaken by the immensity of the country and by the silence and the magic of being in such remote wilderness. And it doesn't take much coaxing and much reminding and much exploiting to get people to share that experience. And I guess my work then is as to softly instruct, but even more importantly to make sure there are no obstructions for them and make it easy for them to go that way so that when the storm does hit that it's not a major disaster for them, you know. And if a storm comes or if the bugs are really bad to at least create situations where they can escape from that. And having the qualified people on hand that care enough about the country and having qualified staff on hand that care enough about the country to see that we're not doing any damage and that can set an example for people.

People can have a spiritual experience with wildlife. Yes they do. But the wildlife sure helps. But there's times that we run trips, I mean I run trips that are not geared towards wildlife. I mean you can do a point A to point B canoe trip on the Thelon, as a matter of fact, I've actually run all my descents on the Thelon I've run a section once from Eyeberry Lake down to Ursus Islands without ever seeing one musk ox. That was two years ago. And the trip before we did we saw hundreds and the trip after we saw many more hundreds, but I mean it is possible in fact for that to happen and people not be disappointed. They might be disappointed at the time or like in the initial part of the trip but by the time any one of our trips seems to come to its closing people are so awed by the experience of being where they are, where they finally realize how exactly how remote they are and how special a place it is that it seems to fall into the background, the importance of seeing wildlife. Fortunately for the Thelon that usually is not a problem,—they remember not seeing wildlife so, but I run trips as well on the Upper Thelon that are not necessarily geared strictly to wildlife either, or somebody could go paddle to Upper Snowdrift which is, and all these lend a spiritual experience to one degree or another. But there's nothing as rich as the Thelon, either be it the head waters or the canoe trips. From the customer perspective—although I can't speak on behalf of spirituality of the Dene, although I sense it, or the Inuit, which I sense even more regarding the Thelon—but the customer perspective and their spirituality, and these are the people who travel more than I do, and these are the people that last year went to Africa, you know into Serengeti or Galapagos and these people are coming to me and saying no matter where they've gone, they have never been able to immerse themselves so much as being part of the land, like they did in the Thelon, and I see the same thing happen with my customers when I take them to Nahanni every spring. I mean you go to Nahanni, I mean it's absolutely astounding picturesque, you go to Virginia Falls and it's the most amazing place, yet the whole scene is at a distance. It's at arms length from you, and you don't really ever become part of that scene.

And you go to the Thelon and the unanimous experience that I have with my customers is that they immerse themselves into a oneness with the land where they feel, where they see themselves in the picture, where they feel as though they actually belong there for the time that they're there. And I believe that's the spirituality you're talking about, the feeling that's associated with that. It's not like the Nahanni where the beauty is so obvious. Maybe it's because the beauty is more subtle, maybe it isn't as such an outstanding feature like the Nahanni is. Yes but once you see the beauty, then it's absolutely astounding even though people have to concentrate harder perhaps. They become more immersed as one with the wilderness and the Thelon because they have to seek it out, it isn't blatantly thrown in their face. I mean there are some things in the Thelon that are, obviously if you're standing when the Beverly herd decides the cross the river it's going to slap you in the face. And some people are fortunately enough to experience that. But for the all over, regardless, taking the wildlife aside as we were talking about earlier the beauty of the Thelon and the value of the Thelon as a, from a scenic, from an aesthetic point of view, is much more subtle and people have to strive to obtain it. And once they've done so it seems to have been that much more a powerful experience, they feel it's a more powerful experience than any other wilderness area they have ever gone into and this is an intrigue because I that I love the Thelon and I know I have a spirituality and I know that I can't explain it for myself, but to hear it from them, people who have traveled much more so than I have on a worldly scale, are the ones who give me this kind of feedback.

Biologist and Outfitter, Alex Hall



Alex Hall, a former wildlife biologist, is one of two non-native outfitters operating in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. He has been guiding trips of the Thelon for 17 years and without question knows the land and the place better than any other person, native, non-native, living or dead. He is a hunter, a knowledgeable biologist, a man of passion, conviction, and intensity, especially on the subject of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. In conversation, Hall turned out to be a confusing blend of passion and pragmatism. He spoke lyrically and convincingly about his love for the land, but it was very difficult to determine how much of this attachment was derived from the fact that he had commodified aspects of the Thelon environment, such as the wolves who live there. Nevertheless, Hall spoke clearly and dealt patiently with my questions and came to be for me the modern-day spokesperson for the dominant Euro-Canadian point of view with respect to the Sanctuary. We spoke in his Fort Smith home:

> I first went down the Thelon in '71. I expected, "Well, gee, this is going to be a real ordeal—six weeks—" I think it was five and a half weeks we were out. We flew from Yellowknife into Sifton Lake. And I thought, "Gee, this is going to be a tough trip—bugs are going to be tough—everything's going to be tough about it but, you know, this is going to be a *real* challenge!" You see? Well, I got through the trip and I thought, "Shit! This was a snap! Anybody can do this!" And I think that was—I didn't really come up with the idea of my business until '72, but I think—I can still remember thinking that at the end of '71, and I think that's probably what started the ball rolling in my mind about conceiving this kind of business to start with. But, it was,

"Gee, this was really unbelievably easy—a lot easier and a lot more interesting than I thought it was going to be." Certainly a lot easier, and I thought, "Gee, anybody can do this!" And I think I thought then, "Gee! I could bring anybody here. Anybody could enjoy this!" And I think that's probably what started it. And I think, you know, what makes the Thelon a great proposition is that anybody can come in and out. It's the easiest river in the barren lands to canoe. You know—there's very few rapids, only a few portages. You can paddle for hundreds of miles without encountering a rapid. Anybody can do it. It's the richest wildlife area in the tundra, the Thelon Game Sanctuary, and most of that richness of biological material is located along the Thelon itself, and the 20 miles of tributary that dump into the central Thelon, that's the richest wildlife there. And so, you know, it has wildlife; it's scenically not the most interesting place. A lot of people find it very dull; I don't. This summer I'll have been down it 27 times from one end of the Sanctuary to the other and I still find it fascinating. I have friends who I know have been down it a number of times, and I had a guy who just wrote me. He went down it for I don't know what time last summer, and he said they went from the Hanbury junction to Beverly Lake in four days because they just used it as a highway to get from one area that he's interested in to get to the—he's not interested in the Thelon Game Sanctuary part of the Thelon—he finds it extremely boring and monotonous. And here I spent my whole summer every year, and have done so for the better part of 20 years on that river and I still never tire of it, and I think the reason I don't tire of it is because of the wildlife, probably most of all. I spend every waking moment just peering around for wildlife. That's all I'm interested in when I'm out there is looking for wildlife. And there's lots of it to be seen.

Wolves are the most interesting and the most socially—the most highly social and most intelligent animals we have in North America next to man. And as I often say, I sometimes wonder about man. But, you know, they're certainly the most sophisticated, socially sophisticated, and the most intelligent of our, you know, the creatures on this continent and, you know, I would never, ever lose my fascination for them. There are a number of dens that I've visited many times, but I have one den, and have to look it up, but I've visited it probably about sixteen different times now—sixteen times in sixteen years—and not all consecutive years—I visited it first in '71—and I keep track of how often it's been occupied, and I think we're up to about eleven or twelve of the sixteen years it's been occupied.

They're sort of my little symbol! Well, we catch a lot of them. You know—that's my speciality—in fact, I'm really pushing that in my new brochure now, which I should have done years ago, I guess, because it's a big attraction, wolves. It's the most—the thing most people want to see when they come up here is a wolf. Not caribou. You get people who really want to see—well, that's part of it. I mean, you know, that's where luck comes in; I've seen hundreds of thousands of caribou in a single herd in a single day, but you don't see that very often and I certainly can't guarantee that to anybody, but I probably know the movements better than anybody anywhere, and I could tell you within ten days of where and when they're going to cross the Thelon River. Probably within five days. But there's so much chance involved with that that I'd probably bat under 50%, even though I know that much.

The big thing about the Thelon, what makes it so saleable, it's the wildlife, that's the main thing. It's the richest wildlife area on the tundra, you know, because you have this boreal element there. You have a mixture of boreal and tundra animals right side by side on a restricted area along the river banks of the river. It's—I always say I couldn't conduct my business without the Thelon, and the reason I've always said that is because I don't know a better place to go consistently in July, and the reason I say that is that the bugs are worse in July, and the Thelon is one of the few rivers—and certainly the best river I know of—to get away from the bugs. And the reason for that, of course, is you have big, gravel boulder beds along, just about everywhere along the Thelon and, as you know, the further away you can stay from green vegetation when the bugs are on—in fact, you can have lunches in the worst kind of days on the Thelon River—the worst kind of bug days, that is—without being bothered by the bugs if you know where to have your lunch. If you can pick a big gravel bar or a gravel island in the middle of the river—and I tell my people when we go to shore on a bad bug day when it's quiet, I say, "When you go to the bathroom, do not go in above the gravel bar into the green vegetation because you'll just bring back about 20,000 black flies and it'll ruin our lunch!" So I always park in a place where the women can go around one corner or behind a rock or some damn thing, and drop their pants, and the men can go the other way. And you know, on bad days I say "Do not enter everything green!"

And of course in the evenings you—I always camp on a big bar and I take my fire—our kitchen is out, you know, away from green vegetation. We have to put our tents up in the green stuff, but it's just amazing the difference, how liveable it can be on a gravel bar on a bad day, compared to getting into the green stuff. And a lot of the people you *do* see—the people that don't know, that have never been to the barren lands before, you'll see them camped in grassy areas, and you think, "Oh, geez, these poor guys don't know that it's better to get the hell out of green stuff and camp on the gravel bars!" Anyway, this one—what makes it saleable, you know, is the wildlife—the fact that you can get away from the bugs during the bad season because of the gravel bars, and it's an area that you don't have to be a skilled canoeist to go to. And, you know, I think it certainly has its scenic points. I'll admit that certain parts of the Thelon aren't too interesting. I think one thing that *is* interesting about the Thelon—when I say The Thelon, I'm talking about basically—I'm really referring to the part that's within the Thelon Game Sanctuary, that section, although I do use parts farther south. But I think the most interesting thing about the Thelon is every day—the country keeps changing every day. What you saw yesterday is not what you'll see tomorrow; it's not what you'll see the next day. The geography keeps changing, the vegetation changes enough, the geography changes enough, so every day it's sort of a new experience. So I think there's that to be said about the Thelon. I wouldn't call it a monotonous river in the sense that the type of scenery you saw yesterday you won't see tomorrow. Every day *is* different. I think that's interesting about it. A lot of people don't think it's—my wife thinks it's not interesting a lot of the Thelon. She does not like the Thelon. I do not agree with her. Certainly, some of the tributaries of the Thelon are amongst, and to me as far as I'm concerned, the most beautiful places on the entire barren lands, bar none.

I think it *will* be a park someday. I think it's a matter of time, maybe. It sounds like a pretty good chance it'll be a park soon. You know—as far as I—what I think should happen—I would like to see it become a park, but after I'm gone. I don't want to see it fucked up, because once it becomes a park, of course, it'll probably be a place I won't want to go to any more. What'll happen is they'll put park wardens in there; they'll have their motor canoes; they'll have their boats with motors on them running up and down, and they'll have people stationed up there. There'll be a lot more people going there; there'll be aircraft activity out there. It will not be the same kind of wilderness experience it is now. It's probably a place I will not want to go to. Like I said, I don't think I can run my business without the Thelon in July, and it worries me. There are other places I can go to, but I don't think I can replace the Thelon easily. I know there's nowhere I can go that will be as good, for a lot of different reasons. Because the Thelon *is* for July. So it worries me, you know—it's a place that's all-important to my way of making a living. You know, like I said, I probably earn 50% of my annual salary out the Thelon Game Sanctuary. So, what worries me—I think it should—I think it should be preserved in perpetuity, but selfishly I would like to see it happen after I'm not around. Unfortunately, I don't think it's going to wait that long.

I'll describe it for you. You start out at Warden's Grove and you got the sandbar out in front of the cabin there which sometimes goes a good way across the river. And the main channel is over on the far side, and it swings out over the right and curves around the sandbar sticking there. And the main channel goes over to the far shore, the shore that Warden's Grove is on, and then you have a deep stretch of a mile in there. It's a good airplane landing spot. And on your right you have a creek coming in with a lot of heavy timber on it, and there's a lot of willow mixed in with it. Coming up from—it starts from a lake up a couple of hundred ft. above the river there and above 5 miles or so. And you go down—you're well hemmed in on both the left and right—you've got the high hills on both sides. And you go down through the gap which is that rocky outcrop thing. Sometimes there's some eagles nesting. And on your left you have the sandy hill coming down there and the well-gravelled shores on both sides. And there's good caribou trail crossings just before there, just before you get to the gap. And the sandy hill there's quite steep and it's a good place to camp just past that—you turn on the left side there and break out of the rock to a sandy beach there. You just go through the gap. And there's a good caribou crossing there. When you pass the gap, you break out into the open there, and on your left you have the big wide sand beach looking down on the islands there. They all have sand beaches, 400 yards wide, 500 yards wide. Before you get into the vegetation on your left, on your right you have the big green hills dropping down with a nice strip of timber, and you have a sense of big country as you lay off to the right there, especially after you pass the first point there. You have the shallows there, and there's some current in there but it's fairly shallow, and you're looking ahead to a grassy island which looks kind of monotonous at that point because it's just out there. Off to your left you have those big stony hills and off to your right you have the nice big green hills, and it's a very scenic spot there. As you can see, I'm going to take a long time to get to Hornby Point, aren't I! We've only gone about 3 miles! Anyway, I can fly down it at, oh, maybe 50 miles an hour; mentally, I can just see the whole thing going down there. It would take me about fifteen trips to do something like that before I can visualize that, eh? At least fifteen trips.

Well, you know, I mean there's a lot of places I still don't want to get stuck! You know, the worst deal to me, the worst thing that could happen to you, is to get stuck out on an exposed place with a gale force wind and raining,and you know—I've been stuck in those places, and I can say with all honesty I'm getting smarter in my old age, and I haven't been stuck in those kinds of situations in a place I didn't want to be for a lot of years now. I sure as hell earlier, in the first half of my career, have been stuck in lots of those kind of places. And, boy! Where, you know, you just hunker down and hope the fuckin' tent doesn't blow away on you and you survive this. You know? But, yeah, you know it's—there are certain areas you go through and hope, "Holy shit, I hope a storm doesn't hit here, but I don't want to be stuck in this sector, eh?" There's no protection, there's no nothing, and you're just going to have to grin and bear it, but I guess a large part of that is knowing when to go through those sectors and when not. You know? One of the things I have now is a friend of mine gave me a very good—good for nothing—barometer. Altimeter? Something I thought I'd never use, but I got it for nothing and he said, "Just take it out there and see what you think." Boy, I think that is the *greatest* thing I have ever seen. I hang that thing in my tent 24 hrs. a day and look at that thing at lot, especially in the morning and the evening. And those things are wonderful, you know, because I can come out and I can see an intimidating sky, but all I have to do is look at my barometer to know how intimidating that shit really is. You know— "Is this going to be a storm coming in or isn't it?" If my barometer goes down, I'll believe it's something worth taking note of, but if the barometer ain't going down, I don't worry about it any more! I tell you, that barometer's been a great thing. So we can sit back on our asses on a lot of technical things. The other thing that's helped alleviate this for me is the improvement in tents over the years. You know, initially we went out there and—not canvas tents—cotton tents, Egyptian cotton tents—and graduated to rather poor nylon tents that didn't have good solid pole structures. But today's modern tents—hell, you know, I'll put my tent in a place in a storm where I wouldn't have dreamed of putting a tent five or six years ago!

Like, if I found a billion dollars worth of gold on the Thelon, I would not stake it and I would not tell anyone about it, and that's the fuckin' truth. And, you know, so that's what the country—I'm not just saying the Thelon, but anywhere. A lot of people say, "You're bullshitting!" or "I don't believe you—" or something. But—you know—Tom Faess would be the first guy to stake it. So that's what it means to me. It's sacred ground. It's sacred ground. There's nothing that could replace it. And the sad thing is, when I started this business—in 1975, you know, I was into business, and I said, "I'll give it 5 years." And I said, "I think there's 25 years left in that country." That was 1975, and that'll put it to the turn of the century. It's eight years or nine years. I said, "I think the big wilderness will still be there in 25 years, but I don't think it'll go beyond the 25 years." And I've got 25 years that I want to use it for the business. And it's sad, you know, that most Canadians don't even know where 40% of the country is. Even educated people I've met, who I regard as educated, and they'll say, "You say you live in the Northwest Territories—where is that?" Where is that 40% of the country? Where is 40% of the country? It's pretty sad.

Anyway, I guess a lot of kids who have some adventure in their bones will always—I know, certainly I would love to have seen the North American plains as it was in the early to mid-1800s, if not earlier. And today we can do that; we can do that in the barren lands in the Northwest Territories. People don't seem to realize that. It's a good thing they don't; we don't want any more damn people up there. It's pretty amazing when you think of it, in this world we have today with almost 5 billion people here in another 10 years or something.

Dear Jim:[63]

It was a pleasure meeting you yesterday. Wish we had had more time together. There are lots of things I would have liked to have asked you but our time was limited and I know you were there to ask me things. I hope your project goes well and you achieve your PhD with speed.

I'm never very happy to see anyone write anything in the Barrens and especially the Thelon Game Sanctuary. There were hundreds of people there last year. I saw 5 fireplaces in one location. I think the traffic will be much lower this year but more and more I realize the power of a magazine article and no doubt yours in Equinox will have the effect of me seeing more canoeists and witnessing the abuse to the land these people bring. I know I can't keep everything for myself—but it would be nice. I'll keep trying.

In that vein, I hope you will reconsider that business about having a motorized boat come up the Thelon from Baker Lake. How would you like to have such a boat pass you during what you thought was one of the most remote canoe trips on the continent? I know I and all my clients will be mad as hell and very upset by this happening to us. I am making 3 trips down the Thelon so I *will* see that boat. I don't think anyone has the ***right*** to abuse that sacred land or the right to ruin someone else's "wilderness experience" in that way. You will be abusing a lot of canoeists (not just us) by running a motorized boat up the Thelon. This is why I will not be able to continue on the Thelon when and if it becomes a park. Not only will it bring more canoeists and other people and airplanes but the park personnel will fuck it up royally. They will have motor boats on the Thelon and that will ruin it forever.

I feel very strongly about the Thelon Game Sanctuary. It's much more than a place I make my living. My soul is there. My ashes will go there eventually. I would fight for it with everything I have. I would kill for it and I would die for it. All Canada's great open wild spaces will soon be gone— they'll soon be chopped up into smaller bits and pieces. I feel so privileged that I was permitted to roam, explore, and discover where only stone-age man has before me and find the true meaning of life in Canada's (and one of the world's) last great wildernesses. Where else in the world can you roam across 1000 miles of land or more and not encounter another human being or see any signs of man other than the now vanished stone-age man? I fear my son will never know it the way I did. The world will be poorer for that. The world is breeding itself into oblivion. Canadians are the stupidest nation of people on this earth. I have always said Canadians don't deserve Canada. They don't know they are the luckiest people on this earth. They have more wild land than any other nation and yet most "educated" people in Canada don't even know where the Northwest Territories—40% of their country—is, when you tell them where you live.

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[63] This is a transcript of a letter that followed up on the conversation with Alex that took place in his home in Fort Smith. The document was dated 25 April 1991.

When I decided to wage battle over the Thelon—I fought it *alone* with my clients for at least one year—I knew the risks. But I decided it was better to keep the miners out. The risks I know were that the Thelon would get increased publicity and increased recognition and attention. I know I was accelerating its demise. It might be "loved to death." Still I chose that over losing it to the mining industry. We saw the results last year. Canoeists increased by some 10 fold. The real casualty might be that the Thelon will end up a National Park soon.

Well these are just some of my feelings and thoughts and I wanted to let you know about them.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Hall

P.S. I was trying to explain to you without any success that I have often felt that being there in the Barren Lands (and in the Thelon for instance) is something akin to a religious experience for me. I know I think that wild country out there as my religion, my church. I worship it. It is also my mistress. It has taught me how to love. Maybe that's what I meant when I said earlier that it has taught me "the meaning of life." It is the great love of my life. That is why my ashes will eventually go out there to the Thelon so I can be at rest with my true love forever.

Park Planner Ron Seale

Ron Seale, Special Advisor on Park Development, on loan from the Canadian Parks Service to the Government of the Northwest Territories, was the most experienced and most knowledgeable "park person" to whom I spoke during the tenure of this investigation. Contributing to the northern park planning process at the ministerial level in both the territorial and federal governments, Seale has been very close to the recent initiative to consider the Thelon Game Sanctuary as a national park. Much of what we discussed was not recorded, because the topics were potentially very sensitive. However, we did speak on tape about his impressions of the Thelon, with useful and interesting results. Seale's views of the Thelon were, to a large extent, detached planner's images of wilderness. We spoke in his Yellowknife office.

> Right off the top I should make it clear that my personal experience on the ground in the Thelon Game Sanctuary is very limited! A lot more limited than I would like it to be. But I have been on the ground briefly; I've flown over a couple or few times. And I guess the images I have personally are of this broad river flowing through a wilderness area—a river with unusual vegetation for its location north of what most people regard as the treeline. And so, an unusual vegetation base and outstanding wildlife populations. Muskox and probably—one of the very few areas where you get muskox and moose occupying the same area, certainly, as well as grizzly and so and so forth. I think beyond that the Thelon is one of those areas that, for me and for a lot of other people, have certain mythic qualities, too. It's been there as a blob on the map for decades. And it is—it's a huge area. And I think it's one of those areas that people, even people who've never been within hundreds of miles with it, kind of associate with harbouring certain elements that they associate with the north and with northern wilderness, more particularly. it obviously has—well, more than interesting, outstanding opportunities for wilderness canoeing parties and people who are interested not so much in a white water experience but in simply a more leisurely canoe trip in an interesting environment, stimulating environment, and then with the excellent chance of seeing impressive wildlife, both in terms of species and numbers of animals.
>
> Steve Woodley, an associate of mine, did the river last summer, and I spent an evening with them in Yellowknife just before they left, and it was kind of interesting. But it was interesting to talk to them before they were setting out on this trip which,

as for virtually everybody who does it, is something they'd been looking forward to for months, if not years or even decades. And what they were looking for in their canoe trip, and how they wanted to spend their time, I found it interesting when they were discussing what they'd brought to read! And it was Steve and his wife, a couple from New England—one was a commercial pilot and his wife was a Wall St. lawyer. The other couple were doctors—both were doctors in zoology and had worked in places like Papua New Guinea and West Africa and so on and so forth. It was interesting how they were approaching this trip as six compatible individuals, but what they were looking for and therefore what they took to read—and Steve typically took some massive tome—you know, some 500 pages of studies on ecological integrity and this sort of stuff. And I think the corporate lawyer took poetry, and one of the biologists took absolutely nothing—he said he didn't want to be bothered with any reading material, he just wanted to go and *experience* this country and didn't want to be *constrained* in any way by what somebody else told him to look for or what somebody else had experienced. He just wanted to go and float and experience it. Somebody else took whodunnits, murder mysteries; I mean, it was really interesting to see how their expectations and what they were looking for was colouring what they were taking to read, including nothing!

As a planner, I'm very conscious of aircraft. I've been in some, well—the National Parks that I was in most recently within the last month were Hauiokela and Hawaii volcanoes, both of which are stunning and both of which are internationally significant. But I was really, really annoyed with the level of helicopter traffic over Hauiokela, which you could never, never get away from. That was specifically a sight-seeing flight as opposed to commercial jet traffic, flying over 30,000 ft. There was a bit of that, too, but the helicopters were really crowded. Years ago, when I was working in the Winnipeg office of Parks Canada, and working on national planning in Nahanni, we were looking at that aircraft access question again. And I think about 98% of the people we asked in the park objected to aircraft intrusions and felt it was detracting from their experience, but every single one of them had arrived by aircraft. I think we're we're getting a bit of that in the Thelon. But I think there are ways of dealing with that particular problem.

I think land and land resources, the resources associated with land, are certainly a major influence on the way that people function and the way they think, the attitudes they tend to develop, the behaviour that they demonstrate. Land is a major influence on all of those things. And I suppose it's, you know, for land you could use lower Manhattan or you could use the Thelon Game Sanctuary. The environment influences whoever it is that uses or functions or lives in that area. I think the other thing that's part of this is the whole question of expectations and anticipation, and the way in which you react to land or are influenced by land like the Thelon depends very much on your own background, your training, whatever it is—formal or informal training—your experience with other kinds of landscapes, both wilderness and other kinds of man-modified landscapes. All of that will influence the way you respond or react to a place like the Thelon. I think, for me, wilderness area like the Thelon—certainly I function differently, just in terms of the way my senses act, in an area like that, than the way my senses act when I'm going to the office in the morning, or something, or when I'm sitting in the office. I tend to—senses are heightened, certainly, when you're in a wilderness area, and particularly if you're alone.

Economic Development Officer, Jimm Simon

A middle manager in the northern park planning matrix was Jimm Simon, Visitor Centre and Interpretive Project Planner for the Parks and Visitor Services Branch of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism for the NWT, whose job it was to set up interpretive efforts for the newly designated heritage rivers in the Keewatin—including the Thelon. Prior to this position, he had been a tourism officer in Rankin Inlet, and in both of his jobs, although he had never had the opportunity to travel in the Thelon area on the ground, he had read about it, promoted it, studied it, and flown over it on frequent occasions. I was intrigued by his insights into the Thelon, especially his comments about "land-as-library" and Thelon trip as "do-able Everest." We spoke in his Yellowknife office.

> When I think of the Thelon, I think of the All the classic images: the herds, the little rings of muskox, the 300,000 caribou swimming across in front of you, gyr falcons, a fish on every cast, that type of stuff is what I see. And it's just so amazing and different and very, very hard to relate to other people I find, and even with slides and photos. And trying to talk to people down south, I mean, you cannot convey the immenseness and the enormity and just the feeling of, you know, "If I walk that *way*, it'll be the north pole, and there's nothing between me and there." I find that amazing. Especially—I come from southern Ontario originally, and it's just—you go back there now and you're never out of sight of a house! And out there you're never within sight of anyone. The oasis quality of the place sticks in my mind. the trees. It does. It's pretty amazing that—well, it's pretty amazing that they're there. Let me think—they do almost seem like—it makes you really realize the enormity of the weather, and I don't know if weather could be enormous but it is, in the Keewatin, I think. And you see these, in many places, little pockets of trees. Just if there's the barest shred of being able to survive, they somehow manage to survive, and it's just so windswept it's amazing.
>
> It's sort of that whole, almost mystical thing. It seems to be almost part of the Canadian identity, and that's the only place you can still go and get it. I mean, canoeing down the Grand River, also a heritage river, just doesn't do the same thing—it's a recreational canoe trip. But the Thelon offers that wilderness get-away-from-it-all, follow-the-footsteps-of-the-explorers with, like the aboriginals, Hudson's Bay Company, the whole—I'm not putting it very well in words but just the allure of the north. Very often when you live up here, you go down south and you spend hours and hours answering questions about what's it like. People are generally just fasci-

nated: "What's it like when it's dark all day? Or light all day?" "Are the bugs worse than you can possibly imagine?" And I think a lot of people are still seeking that last adventure. It's sort of—it's a "do-able Everest." The Thelon has received enough publicity and promotion in that small wilderness canoeing circle—the Kazan and the Thelon. But the Thelon is more do-able. The Farley Mowat books, all those things—people want to go and experience some of that "beyond the tundra, the barrens," and it's not even canoeing through a wild river that runs through a boreal forest. There's lots of places to do that. But there aren't many rivers that you *can* go and do a week-long or a two week-long quite safe but still get that wilderness experience. You don't have to go out and canoe for 65 days from one end of the river to the other. You can do it in your vacation, and come back and have—the best slide collection of anybody on your block of caribou and mosquitoes and your wilderness canoe trip! But at the same time, you're not going to run into 300 other canoeists.

I'll tell you one thing that I have learned in my relatively brief time in the north is that land, and the whole concept of land, is very, very different to aboriginal people, specifically Inuit, than it is to us. And I'm not quite sure how—if this is actually relevant to your question or not. But certainly Inuit consider themselves as products of the land, and that the land is their home—this is my interpretation—the land is there to nourish them, provide them, give them life, maintain their culture. If you talk to Inuit people about "What is it that makes your culture, or that helps your culture survive?" they will say their language, which is what most cultures will say, and their ability to hunt, to be out on the land. That's a lot different from what I would say makes *my* culture survive. Land is their library, really; it's where they learn. From my personal perspective—well, I've learned a lot from that and from being able to travel with the Inuit and kind of get a very vague insight into that, the land up here—I don't know—just—you know—like, the almost insignificant reality of being an individual is what I have found in travelling around the—not the—I'm being very philosophical—around the Thelon and the Kazan rivers and into the game Sanctuary a little bit, is when you're all alone on the tundra and you see 100,000 caribou, or when you're standing, watching the sun go down at 2 o'clock in the morning on top of a gravel ridge, and you can hear the sandhill cranes or whatever, you think—or at least I thought—a lot more about just generally the concept of "What are we doing here on earth, and what are we doing to the earth, and what right do we have to do this, and what's it going to be like when we're gone?"

Expressions of Place: Caribou Inuit

Written Texts

In spite of an exploration history dating back to the late 18th century, written Inuit records were not published until the late 1980s.[64] Substantial ethnographic accounts were not available until the 1920s, and while these are excellent, there is not a great deal of writing that deals with Inuit conceptions of land, or specifically with Inuit perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary area.

Europeans who ventured near the barrenlands on the west shore of Hudson Bay were more interested in finding a route to the orient than they seemed to be in making any kind of substantial record of the people they met along the way. Hudson (1610), Button (1612), Bylot and Baffin (1615), Munk (1619), Foxe and James (1631) all potentially encountered Inuit who knew of the Thelon River region, but either saw no native people or chose not to mention chance sightings in written accounts. Jens Munk reported coming into contact with no native people as he tacked down the west coast of Hudson Bay, but did sight a stray dog with harness which led him to conclude that the area was not wholly destitute of man.[65]

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[64] Burnett (1985) reports that the reason for this was that the Inuit did not develop a written language until the 18th century when Christian missionaries committed oral Inuktitut to paper with a syllabic alphabet. The first Inuktitut translations were of the Bible and other religious materials. The first examples of Inuit poetry in print are books arising from the work of Rasmussen (1929) and Jenness (1925). Inuit literature, however—books written by Inuit—does not appear until much later, in the late 70s.

[65] As cited in Birket-Smith 1929: 20.

The first sketchy record of the existence of Inuit in the vicinity of the barrenlands was contained in *The Central Eskimo*, in which, based on his own experiences in the north and observations and collections of Captain George Comer, Franz Boas provides details of people living in the interior lands west of Hudson Bay (Boas 1964). This ethnographic account of the coastal Inuit across the top of North America remains a first and a classic work. However, it has neither first hand, nor confirmed information concerning the Inuit of the Thelon River area, beyond marking this as the initial ethnographic record of the barrenland Inuit.

The first and still the best comprehensive ethnographic record of the Inuit of the Barrens is the account of the Fifth Thule Expedition (1921-24). Its leader, Knud Rasmussen, was a Dane who had travelled and studied extensively in Greenland—study which included becoming fluent in Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit. Even though in the 1920s the Canadian Government was worried about Greenlandic Inuit hunting muskoxen on Ellesmere Island, particularly the threat to sovereignty that such activity posed, it granted Rasmussen's request to follow on in his first four expeditions in the Thule series and make his fact-finding trip across the Canadian Arctic.[66] The result of the Fifth Thule Expedition (1921-24) is an incomparable 10-volume set of ethnographic books that document the cultural depth and diversity of the Canadian North, in particular the Inuit who inhabited the region of the Thelon River.[67]

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[66] These expeditions all occurred in Greenland.

[67] Of course the work done by Diamond Jenness on the Copper Inuit, who lived to the northwest of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, work done as part of the Canadian Arctic Expedition (1913-18) led by Vilhjalmur Stefansson, was as substantial as Rasmussen's but did not cover people or lands as far south or inland as those in the vicinity of the Thelon River.

The relevant volumes of the Fifth Thule Expedition report are Volume V, Kaj Birket-Smith's two-part *The Caribou Eskimos Material and Social Life and Their Cultural Position*, and Volume VII, Rasmussen's three-part *Intellectual Culture of the Hudson Bay Eskimos.* These works established an essential distinction in the ethnological record of Canadian Inuit, and that was to recognize that the groups living on the Barrens west of Hudson Bay were the only non-coastal or inland Inuit anywhere on the globe. They called them "Caribou Eskimos." Birket-Smith wrote:

> It may be small and unimportant—a handful of people in the middle of the arctic waste— but [the group] has acquired a natural right to be regarded as a complete unity, in that it possesses a culture that is essential different to all other forms of culture among the otherwise homogeneous Eskimo stock. ... The importance of caribou hunting as far as the Caribou Eskimos are concerned cannot be rated highly enough. To them the caribou occupies at least the same position as the seal and the walrus to their kinsmen, or as the bison of the past to the Plains Indians. The caribou is the pivot round which life turns. (Rasmussen 1929: 9)

In his more detailed consideration of exactly who was a member of the group called "Caribou Eskimo," Birket-Smith identified four tribes: the Qaernermiut, Hauneqtormiut, Harvaqtormiut and Padlimiut, the Qaernermiut—meaning "dwellers of flat land"—being the group living west of Rankin Inlet. According to Birket-Smith:

> The Eskimos who live by Baker Lake often call their kinsmen to the northwest around [Back River]: Ahiaqmiut, although inhabitants at both places are Qaernermiut; ahiaq means "the far away", or more correctly "the out-of-the-way". Aligatalingmiut is also used about the Qaernermiut west of Baker Lake. This name is known to the Copper Eskimos as that of a tribe south of Thelon River "on a large river close to the country of the whitemen."

Rasmussen and Birket-Smith's keen eyes for observation were aided greatly by the fact that they were both fluent in Inuktitut, learned during their previous expeditions in Greenland. Although the dialects of the Inuit in the vicinity of Chesterfield Inlet were slightly different from Greenlandic Inuktitut, these researchers were apparently able to converse freely with the people they met, collecting stories, maps, and a remarkable quantity and variety of cultural information.

The most important contribution of the Fifth Thule Expedition is the fact that Rasmussen, through his technique of getting people to draw maps and identify place names, established for the first time that Inuit actually knew and used the mid-region of the Thelon River valley.[68] It was Inuk hunter Puker'luk (See Figure 7 on page 217 and Table 1 on page 216) who drew a map of the Thelon River from a point 160 km west of Beverly Lake through to the rapids at the east end of Schultz Lake, detailing the names and meanings of 47 significant places along the way.[69]

Although the detail of Puker'luk's hand drawn map is not as rich as the maps for the Kazan River region, southeast of the Thelon, Puker'luk's efforts on Rasmussen's behalf established that Inuit had many camps and hunting places along the sections of the Thelon River that are now part of the game Sanctuary.

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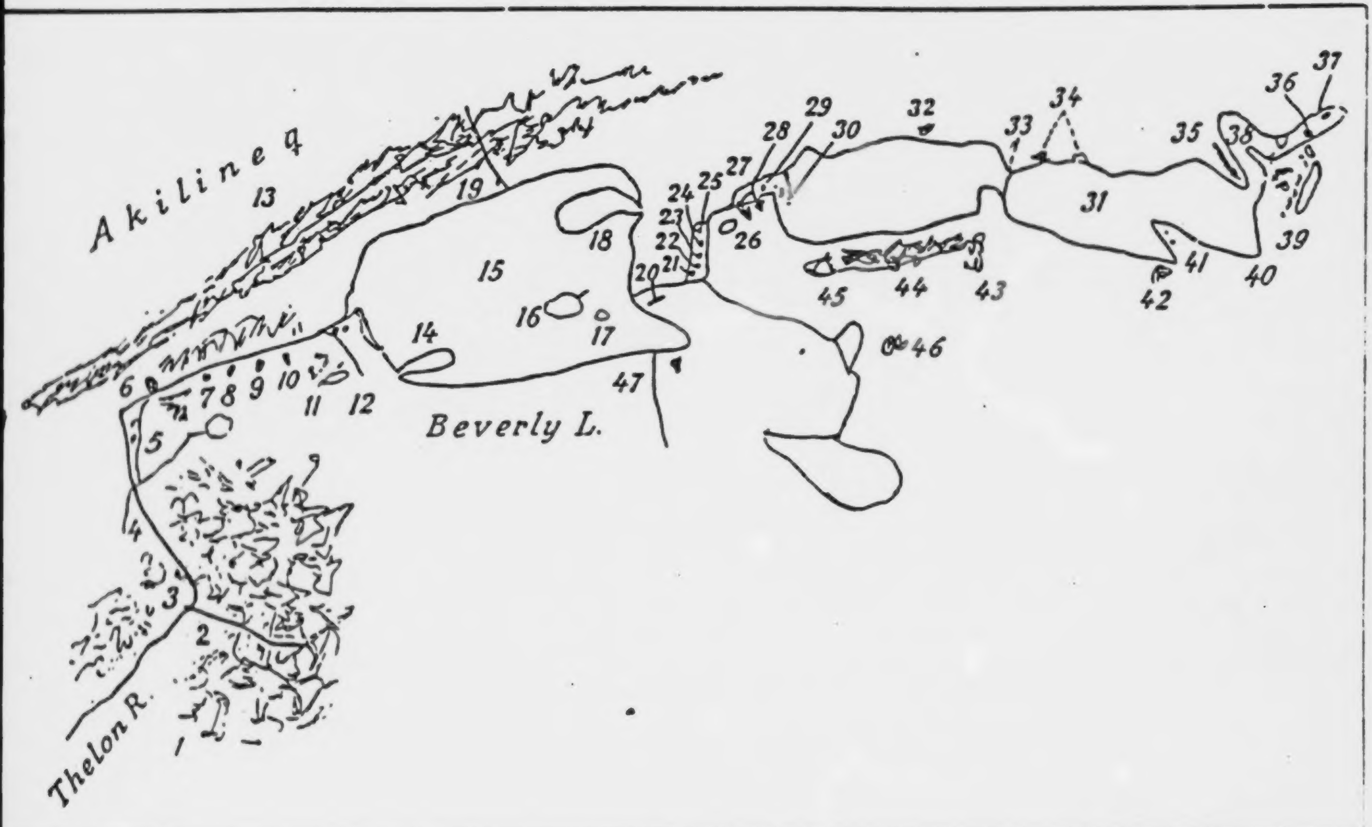
[68] The fact that this went as well as it apparently did is absolutely remarkable when one considers that for many of the people encountered by the expedition, the expedition members were the first white people they'd ever seen, and, for that matter, the first time that some of them had *seen* a pencil and paper and/or committed a portion of their knowledge to that medium.

[69] It's interesting to note that the contemporary map of comparable scale (NTS 1:1,000,000) shows only 12 place names with no derivation of their meanings.

Water Names	01. The salty one (a tributary)
	04. River of the broads
	07. The big bend
	08. The little bend
	10. The big crossing place
	15. The place with many washed-up tree trunks
	18. The big wing (a point)
	20. The place where the river disappears
	21. The increase
	27. The place of cold shivers
	33. A narrow place
	35. The big bend
	38. The trace (a long, narrow point)
	39. The one that lies across (a lake)
	40. The bay
	41. The red-brown point
Land Names	05. The place where one must go through talus
	09. The place with the curious hills
	11. The small hills
	13. That which lies on the other side of where one is
	34. The hills that terminate
	42. The smoothly arched one
	43. Those that lie in shelter (of 42)
	44. The big back of a ridge
Floral Names	03. Woodlands
	47. The one with the small trees
Faunal Names	01. The place with the land bears
	12. The caribou country
	19. The place of future platform skins (a caribou crossing
	22. The place where sea-birds which in moulting time can
	25. The place where one gets caribou calves
	26. The place where young must be suckled
	29. The young gulls
	32. The place where one goes in order to eat marrow
	45. The big goose-haunt
Names for Historic Events	06. The land of Indians
	16. The capsizing place
	17. The laughing place
	23. The place where one had to howl with fear
	28. The killed Indians
Names from Material Culture	14. The place with the meat platforms
	02. The place where a knot is untied
	24. The one equipped with cairns
	31. The place with the big house
	36. The place with the big house
	37. Its house (An island)

Table 1. The Key to Puker'luk's Thelon Map: Organized by semantic category (after Andrews 1990: 10), Puker'luk's map shows a preponderance of purely descriptive names, a proportion of names referring to faunal connections, and only a few referring to material culture or historic events.


Akilineq
Thelon R.
Beverly L.
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3
4
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6
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8
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14
15
16
17
18
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Figure 7. Puker'luk's Map of Akilineq and the Thelon River: Looking south to north across what is now the western extent of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, this is the map drawn by Inuit hunter Puker'luk for anthropologist Knud Rasmussen on the Fifth Thule Expedition in 1922.

The names on Puker'luk's map (See Table 1 on page 216) also point to the importance of pure description in Inuit place names for the Thelon area, indicating the functional role that these terms played in navigation.

In Birket-Smith's work, it seems clear that the Caribou Inuit did not venture further west than Puker'luk's description. Birket-Smith delineates the territory of the Caribou Inuit as follows:

> Northwest of Lake Boyd and Dubawnt River there are still extensive Barren Grounds, but west of long. 100° W., where the Dubawnt and Thelon Rivers meet [this is on the SW end of Beverly Lake], Eskimos seldom, or never, live. Hanbury met with the most westerly Eskimos at Tibjalik or Beverley Lake and writes about them: "On the main Ark-i-li-nik River there is a stretch of country about eighty miles in length into which no human being enters. The Eskimo does not hunt so far west, and Yellow Knives and Dog Ribs from Slave Lake do not go so far east." The Barren Grounds continue, gradually poorer and more wasted, northwards right to the Arctic Sea; but neither do the Caribou Eskimos here go right to their boundary. At upper Back River the Yellow Knives do not extend their hunting beyond Musk-ox Lake, and it was only a little above Lake Beechy that Warburton Pike found traces of Eskimos. ... The middle and lower part of the Back River belong to another group of tribes, the most famous of which is the Netsilingmiut. It has previously been the general opinion that the natives whom James Anderson met at this river were Caribou Eskimos, as they lived up country and were in possession of various European objects which must have come from Churchill. This belief, plausible enough in itself, is wrong, however. The tribes living at Back River, i.e. the Utkuhigjalingmiut and Haningaformiut, have in many respects an inland culture and trade regularly with the Caribou Eskimos; but these latter are not known to have ever extended their territory so far towards the north. Roughly, lat. 65°30' N. (approximately). Thus the whole area lies to the south of the Arctic circle. (Birket-Smith 1929: 30)

In speaking about social life and organization, Birket-Smith touches on ideas of land ownership. He writes:

> They know no government. Here, for once, is a society which is entirely built upon that voluntary agreement of which Kropotkin dreamt. Subject to personal liability towards the inherited laws everyone enjoys full individual freedom. And just as foreign as a government is the idea of a State, with its intimate connection with and possession of land, as Ratzel has

> pointed out.[70] The community as such does not *own* the land upon which its members live, no more than it owns the exclusive right to the use of the land. It may decline to accept a stranger who settles on its territory; but it cannot forbid him to live there alone and make use of anything he choses. In the position of the community as regard the land there is thus an essential difference from the division into certain hunting areas which is to be found among the Algonkian tribes, Californians and even much more primitive peoples such as the Veddah in Ceylon. (Birket-Smith 1929: 260)

While Birket-Smith dealt predominately with the material culture—with drums and the process of drumming for example—Rasmussen recorded the intellectual content of the songs and culture. Rasmussen questioned Caribou Inuit about creation, but most answered that they knew nothing about this; however, searching for truths through stories and songs uncovered some very interesting material. For example, he heard this story/song combination from an Iglulingmiut (a tribe of Inuit slightly north of the Caribou Inuit) shaman called Unaleq:

> It is said that once upon a time the world fell to pieces, and every living thing was destroyed. There came mighty downpours of rain from the heavens, and the earth itself was destroyed. Afterwards, two men appeared on earth. They came from hummocks of earth; they were born so. They were already fully grown when they emerged from the ground. They lived together as man and wife, and soon one of them was with child. Then the one who had been husband sang a magic song:

> Inuk una,
> usuk una
> pa'tulune
> nerutulune
> pa' pa' pa'!
>
> A human being here
> A penis here
> May its opening be wide

---

[70] In his foundational work in human geography, Freidrich Ratzel (*Anthropogeographie* 1909-12) applied Darwinian thinking to Ritter's organic theory of nations (that people live *with* the land, and that nations have *life*) and came up with a land-based theory of organic competition, meaningful interaction between organs that are capital, people and a boundaried ecumene. In reality, however, the connection to land about which Birket-Smith is writing here is probably more attributable to Ritter than to Ratzel.

And roomy.
Opening, opening, opening!

When these words were sung, the man's penis split with a loud noise and he became woman, and gave birth to a child. From these three mankind grew to be many (Rasmussen 1929-30: 252).

The stories collected by Rasmussen covered the range of experience of the Caribou Inuit from practical to supernatural concerns. Most of the stories seemingly had a point, a role to play in explaining the lives or practices of the people. A story called "The musk oxen that spoke in human speech," told by Inugpasugjuk, is an example that relates to the Thelon area:

Two musk oxen, both bulls, were discovered and pursued by human beings, and endeavoured to escape. The dogs were sent after them, and the musk oxen ran up to the top of a hill, and one of them suddenly began talking like a human being: "My dear little cousin, the dogs are after us. Let us try to get up to the top of a mountain." The musk oxen took to flight once more and came to the top of a mountain and placed themselves back to back, ready to meet the dogs. At first the hunters were afraid, and dared not approach, but later they took courage and killed them. This, it is said, was the first time musk oxen were ever killed by human beings, who were formerly afraid to hunt them (Rasmussen 1929-30: 270).

Perhaps the strongest and most instructive message that comes from Rasmussen's ethnography about people/place relationships of the Caribou Inuit is his detailing of the powerful and interwoven connections between the people and the spirit worlds above and below the planes of mortal human existence. He makes it quite clear, however, that the idea of a God, or group of gods, to be worshipped is altogether alien to their minds. Rasmussen writes:

> They know only powers or personifications of natural forces, acting upon human life in various ways, and affecting all that lives through fair and foul weather, disease and perils of all kinds. These powers are not evil in themselves, they do not wreak harm of evil intent, but they are nevertheless dangerous owing to their unmerciful severity where men fail to live in accordance with the wise rules of life decreed by their forefathers. The purpose of the whole system is, to use an expression current among the Polar Eskimos of North Greenland, "to keep a right balance between mankind and the rest of the world." The term used by the

> Hudson Bay Eskimos for guiding powers is *ersigifvut* "those we fear" or *mianerifavut*, "those we keep away from and regard with caution" (Rasmussen 1929-30: 62).

The three main guiding powers for the Hudson Bay Inuit, according to Rasmussen, are as follows: *Arnaluk takanaluk*, "the woman down there," "the spirit of the sea," or one who is generally regarded to be the mother of all marine animals who lives at the bottom of the sea; *Sila*, the spirit of the weather or of the universe; and *Aningat* or *Tarqeq*, the "moon's man," or the moon spirit through which the various powers and functions of the moon are exercised.

In the words and voices of the people to whom he spoke during the two years the Fifth Thule Expedition spent in the vicinity of the west coast of Hudson Bay, Rasmussen paints a vivid picture not of people and land as discrete entities, but of a rather comprehensive system of taboos and beliefs wrapping and/or binding people, place, and animals to a way of life that somehow allowed most to survive to see another day.

Life, for the Caribou Inuit, as portrayed by Rasmussen was, by southern standards, unspeakably difficult, but it was an existence in which the people seemed to find certain joy. For much of the year, they lived without heat in snow houses. Starvation was a reality for a people dependent on a migratory animal such as the caribou. Nevertheless, they were willing and genial hosts and forthcoming informants. But for all of the categories used by Rasmussen to consider the intellectual culture, there emerge no *obvious* insights into what land itself meant to the people of the Thelon.[71]

Birket-Smith went on to become a distinguished author on the Inuit, revisiting several times the intellectual ground covered during the Fifth Thule Expedition. In *The Eskimos* (1936) he notes that within the full range of pan-Arctic Inuit there are three genuinely inland tribes, two groups living on fish on river broad river valleys in Alaska and the Caribou Inuit on the barrengrounds west of Hudson Bay. But he makes the point that the Alaskan inland Inuit are really dependent on the sea, buying blubber, skin for thongs and boat coverings from coast dwellers. He calls the adaptations of the Caribou Inuit of the Barrens "unique in Eskimo territory." (Birket-Smith 1936: 110).

In addition, the 15 year distance from experiences in the Barrens seems to have given Birket-Smith reason to help his reader understand the nature of the territory inhabited by the Caribou Inuit. He writes:

> The physical conditions there may be characterized briefly as follows: a low country smoothed by ice, where softly rounded hills rise above wide plains, and where the caribou still roam in immense herds; everywhere there is a super-abundance of water, bog, small ponds and lakes of all sizes full of fish, with outlets through several large rivers (Birket-Smith 1936: 110).

He presents these conditions as the physical and environmental circumstances which gave rise to the culture of the Caribou Inuit. He goes on to say:

> The big lakes in the interior and the river courses running from west to east, where the caribou have their crossing places during the great treks in spring and autumn, are the foci of the population, and only about a

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[71] Main chapter headings were the following: Eskimo Life; Religion & Views of Life; Powers that Rule; Life in the Land of the Dead; The Shamans; Amulets; Magic Words; Rules of Life; Spirits; Songs, Dances & Games; and Folk Tales and Myths.

> third of it spends two months every summer down by the sea for seal and walrus hunting. To most of these Eskimos the salt water is and always will be something strange (Birket-Smith 1936: 110).

Birket-Smith also in this later book makes generalizations that may be useful in the full context of this study. For example:

> The Caribou Eskimos are skilful hunters, but very improvident, and when towards the end of winter the autumn supplies have been consumed, there usually occurs a period of want until the caribou begin to arrive from the south. Nearly every winter one or two families succumb to hunger, and under such circumstances cannibalism may take place. It would be unjust, however, to put *all* the blame upon their inability to refrain from eating up their stores. The periods of want seem to have become worse during the last generation, and there is no doubt that no small responsibility for this rests upon the introduction of modern rifles both among the Eskimos and among the Indians; but it is doubtless just as much due to the forced fox trapping, which makes the Eskimos entirely dependent upon the trading post. The man who dies of hunger surrounded by fox skins to a value of five hundred dollars is by no means unknown (Birket-Smith 1936: 111).

A final point from Birket-Smith's later work is an observation made late in the book regarding the ancient nature of the Caribou Inuit, complete with speculation that these people and their relationship with land may in fact predate coastal Inuit. He writes:

> A detailed analysis of their material equipment shows this to be of an extremely primitive character; no less than 80 percent of its elements are also to be found among all other Eskimo tribes and must thus be assumed to be ancient. As Knud Rasmussen has shown, their religion is in similar case. Furthermore, as has been mentioned earlier, there is not the slightest evidence of their ever having lived by the sea. When one associates this with the fact that the Eskimos' first step in the direction of adaptation to coast life must be assumed to have taken place in the Central regions immediately to the north of their territory, it is no far step to the assumption that these Caribou Eskimos are the last remnant of the primitive Eskimo (or Proto-Eskimo) people, a remnant that has remained on the wide tundras with their enormous flocks of caribou untouched for the most part by the development that took place on the coast and by the impulses that made themselves felt far to the west at Bering

> Strait; that they are indeed a small, forgotten relic of an ancient era (Birket-Smith 1936: 189).

There were others who touched the world of the Caribou Inuit after the Fifth Thule Expedition—churchmen, ethnographers, and other working people—who wrote about their experiences in the north. Because these impressions, like most Euro-Canadian accounts, say more about the writer than the subject, I chose to consider them in the previous chapter. The one area of inquiry that merits inclusion in this chapter has to do with the encouragement of Inuit art in the north. The southerners involved in this industry have left an interesting record of Inuit perspectives on the world as represented in their art.

Williamson, for example, writes of "gently-spoken Mongoloids who spanned this continent some twenty centuries before the babe was born in Bethlehem." But the interesting aspect of the article is Williamson's point of view as an Inuktitut linguist. He interprets art done by Keewatin artists through his knowledge of language, but sets this in a fascinating matrix of fact and speculation. He writes:

> The Eskimos traditionally were truly a religious people, seeing in each part of life significances transcending the material. The hunting life, the daily matching of the man with animals who shared the names of neighbours, companions in the universal soul, was not a secular pursuit, but girded with the prayers, restraints and observations of a people who respected all the unseen working powers of nature (Williamson 1965: 7).

And in setting out art as a possible source of knowledge about Inuit conceptions of land, Williamson goes on:

> The people had all along that feel for the beauty, shape, and surging line, that power to tell the world excitingly of how they see themselves, their land and what it means to them. The thought that they were even needed, liked, appreciated for their culture and their potential to express

> it came to them first from the people themselves, from the dispersed ones writing home or returning from other northern places (Williamson 1965: 11).

Jack and Sheila Butler went to Baker Lake in 1969 to extend the federal government's sculpture program and to establishing printmaking. Their insights into the images of Caribou Inuit artists are somewhat more accessible than Williamson's. Two stories by Sheila Butler about their work with the artists of Baker Lake (Butler, S. 1975; 1988) are rich in detail of how the printmaking and sewing programs got underway in Baker Lake, but lack detail on the substance of the imagery. However, in a speech in the Inuit Lecture Series at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Jack Butler brought with him a selected series of slides featuring the art work of Baker Lake. The power in the images (at least as described in the transcript of the speech) comes from the way in which they reinforce notions already covered in the ethnographic literature. One example provides an idea about Butler's view of art and what it has to say:

> (Speaking to a projected slide image) This is a man whose work I adore and whose work is very rarely seen. His name is Harold Qarliksaq. He is in his late 40s, he lives primarily as a hunter, he draws two or three drawings a month and he generally does the drawings out on the land in the summer or in the igloo in the winter when he is hunting. He has a kind of feeling for line that has more subtlety and delicacy and sensitivity, I think, than most. His understanding of the animals and the events that he is depicting are poignantly clear. There is something very special to him; I think this could come right off a cave wall from prehistory. I think that that is an incredible statement about the caribou, about line, about pattern, but most of all, about the caribou. This drawing of the drum dance is really something else where the figures are so taught, so tense and yet so animated. This is a spiritual experience—this is not play—where the figures, many of whom are identified as to name, are gathered together. There is a group of old women, including a blind woman, who are singing the chanted background of *ai ee ai ee ai eeyah* and we called them the *qiyaaya* behind the drummer, who has this boom, boom, boom going on and he has got this in the simplest possible way just with a pencil line. Another example of absolute

> economy of means and I think, a very poignant, personal statement (Butler, K.J. 1977: 16).

Two of the most telling and informative sources of information about the Caribou Inuit as revealed through artwork are an analysis of work of the dozen best known artists from Baker Lake, seven men and five women (Blodgett, 1983), and a very interesting set of illustrated stories told and drawn by Ruth Aniktussi (1986). Blodgett's book shows clearly how art reveals the close ties to the land of the people of Baker Lake. The images show the dependence of the mother and child and the *amautiq*, the hooded garment in which the child rides, that binds them together until well after the child is mobile. They illustrate the type of knowledge about caribou kept by hunters—Luke Anguhadluq, for example, distinguishes winter and summer coats of caribou with the use of a single line under the belly, reflecting perhaps the importance of knowing the meat and hide qualities of an animal from a distance. Some idea of the focus and concerns of Inuit artists from Baker Lake may be gained from the frequency of subject matter in their images:

Shaman	8
Caribou	7
Mother and Child	5
People's faces	4
Birds	4
Woman	3
Fishing	3
Kayaks	3
People in Camp	2
Wolves	2
Drum Dancing	1
Bears	1

Blodgett's commentary is useful in making sense of of these subjects. For example, on the images of Simon Tookoome, she writes:

> A number of Tookoome's graphics directly illustrate religious beliefs or indirectly reflect them. All three prints illustrated here include such shamanistic elements as transformation, spirits, and duality or multiplicity. The man jigging for fish has a mask-like face and animal feet, while human and animals heads appear along the length of his arm; perhaps these elements signify a shaman or, simply, his aid to the fishermen and hunters. In *I Am Always Thinking About the Animals* it may be a hunter, like Tookoome himself, whose thoughts of animals sprout from his head while his three-part face looks in all directions, as though continually searching for game. The animals and humans around him could also represent the shaman's central role in helping the hunters in their pursuit of game through his intermediary role between the world of humans and that of the animals. For as the title of the print *The World of Man and the World of Animals Come Together in the Shaman* states, the shaman is an interconnecting force between the two worlds. Tookoome illustrates the shaman's intermediary role and his ability to be both human and animal by giving him one human foot and one animal one. His bird-like wings enclose animal and human heads that are earthly, spiritual, or both. The dual, even multiple, nature of the shaman is also shown in his face, primarily two facing profiles, but also a third frontal face created by the profiles of the other two.

But the problem, even with Blodgett's fine work, is that the outsider is always present as intermediary. The *Inuit* perspective on Qamanittuaq Inuit art is something that did not arrive until 1986 with the publication of *Qikaaluktut: Images of Inuit Life* by Ruth Annaqtuusi Tulurialik (Tulurialik and Pelly 1988). This book was different in the sense that with the help of a southern writer, who aided in the shaping of the stories for publication, this artist was able to present her artwork *and* the stories from which it was derived.

This combination of visual and verbal imagery turns out to be an important window on Inuit perceptions of their world. Although in isolation, in the book, the stories and images have not the potency of actual conversations and travel with native artists, the work is well worthy of mention here because of the way in which two stories support and reinforce later interviews with Qamanittuaq residents.

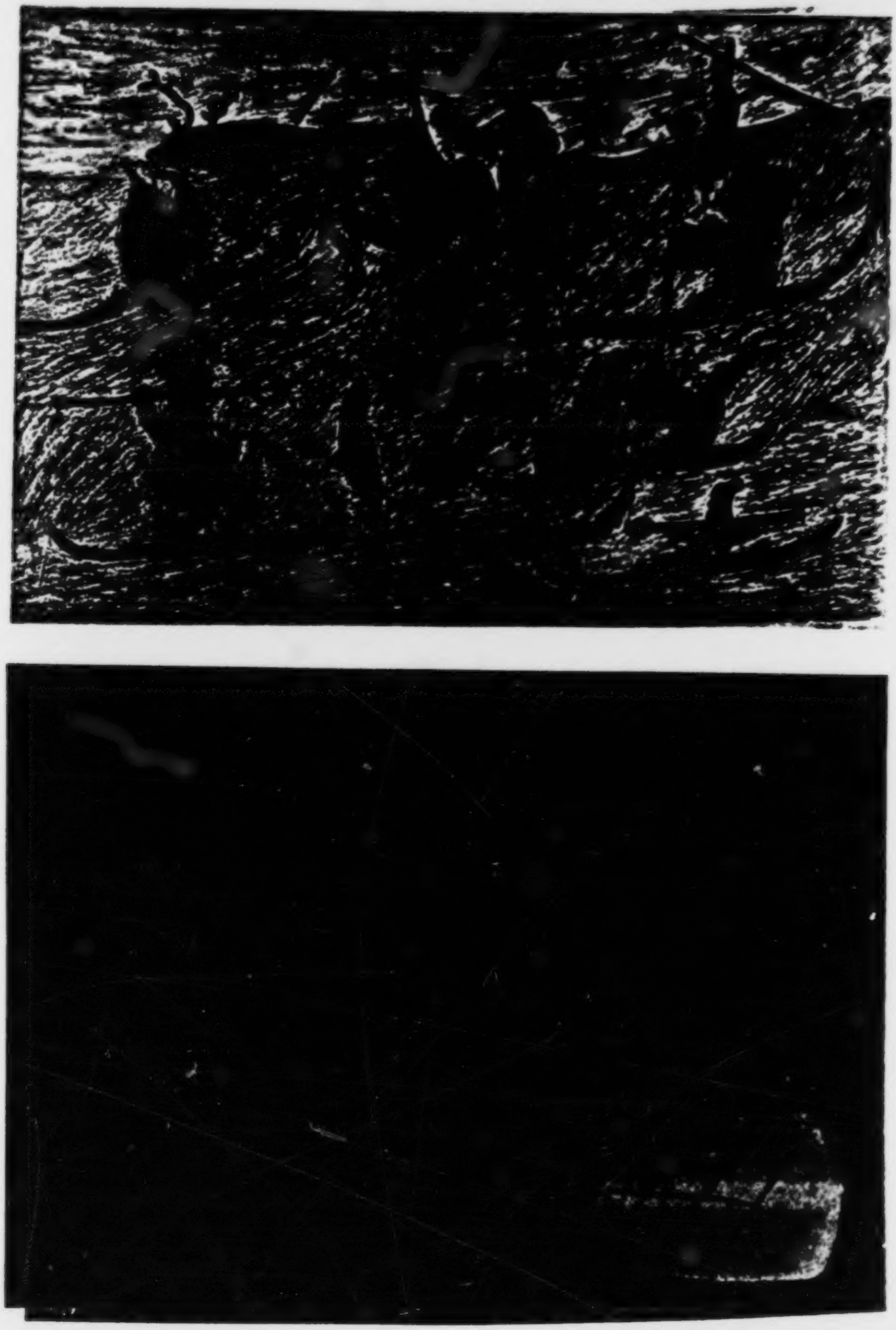

Figure 8. **Visual stories by Ruth Annaqtuusi Tulurialik:** Representing a major departure in the documentation of imagery in Inuit art, Qamanittuaq artist Ruth Annaqtuusi Tulurialik has published a book of images that stand with the stories from which they were derived. The top image, entitled "Tukipqutaq," tells the story of fish marking rocks. The bottom image, "Bad Policeman," is about the arrival of the RCMP and the application of "qablunat" laws.

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Tukipqutaq

The tukipqutaq is a rock that marks a place where the fishing is very good. It is placed on top of an inuksuk (pile of rocks) and its special shape points out over the water. If you look along the top of the stone you can see where the fish are. A man from a camp near this inuksuk is out hunting a caribou that was trying to cross the river, while his son fishes from the point.

Another family is travelling with the strong spring current down the river. They know about this fishing place from years past so have planned to stop before continuing the journey. The oldest son, in the lead, has already reached the spot indicated by the tukipqutaq and is readying his kakivak and auladjut. The rest of the family are not far behind in their kayaks, the father accompanied by the youngest son, the mother keeping an eye on the next son. This is his first time travelling in his own kayak and he is having some trouble with the current. So he is walking his kayak through the shallow water. He will soon rest on shore.

The family will be on its way in a few hours, thankful the tukipqutaq has once again provided them with a good supply of fish for the journey ahead.

Bad Policeman

In 1954 the RCMP were always watching for people going out hunting. They said the hunters should not kill any more caribou because it was the spring season. When they saw a boat leaving they chased after it to take away the guns. There were lots of caribou across the lake.

I remember one day some boats left very early, probably while the RCMP were sleeping. But my father and mother, Thomas and Elizabeth Tapatai, along with young David Annonowt and old Saqpuq, were later getting away. So the RCMP went after them. One man stood in the front of his boat and yelled "STOP!"

I watched this from the shore, at our camp down by the Anglican mission, along with Deborah Niego, Lucy Tupik, and Salumi, an old woman who was visiting us. Lucy was looking forward to cutting up the caribou to make dried meat. But when I saw the policeman I though: We will not have any caribou to eat after all. I would have nothing to eat but more biscuits.

The policemen were here to bring qablunat laws. The laws were supposed to protect us, they said, but this time they only hurt us.

In the years to come, as more of such voices are published and a body of such work is created, there will be opportunities for much more substantial understandings to be passed along from the Inuit perspective. As it stands now, with the exception of Ruth Tulurialik's work, Inuit art and commentary about

Inuit art can only support constructs that emerge from sources close to the people themselves.

The 1970s saw a dramatic shift in both the nature and substance of ethnographic work in the Arctic, for it was in this decade that the politicization of land began in earnest. Scientific work increased and with it an increase in popular writing about the north (i.e. Wilkinson 1970). But the most significant document produced in this period was the three volume *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project* and its spin-off publications, notably those by Hugh Brody. This was a huge initiative of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada to map and document historic and contemporary land use patterns of Inuit right across the Northwest Territories. Following preliminary discussion on this large and important initiative, work commenced in mid-1973, and the report was published in three volumes: Volume One *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project* (Freeman 1976a) (containing summarized area by area findings and conclusions); Volume Two: *Supporting Studies* (Freeman 1976); and Volume Three *Land Use Atlas* (Freeman 1976b).

The part of Volume One that pertains to the Thelon region is a chapter dealing with "Inuit Land Use in Keewatin District and Southampton Island" (Welland 1976). Here are excerpts of Welland's description of land use in the Thelon Area:

> During [1916-1956], populations of Inuit were then centred along the shores of many lakes and rivers, especially along the Kunwak and Kazan rivers systems and along the Thelon River as far inland as the Beverly Lake area. Many people also lived northwest of Baker Lake in an area that extended north to Garry Lake. During the fall caribou migration, people camped at many of the caribou crossings in the area, and these camps were often subsequently used as winter camps. During winter, people trapped and hunted from their main camps, then in spring they

> often moved to favourite fishing places or to camps where they could shoot wildfowl. ...The Thelon River system was well populated, with many camps at caribou crossing places. The Akilingmiut lived all along the shores of Shultz, Aberdeen and Beverly lakes, and they sometimes travelled west along the Thelon River system to gather wood.

Perhaps the most relevant and potentially interesting portion is the chapter written by ethnologist Hugh Brody, entitled "Land Occupancy: Inuit Perceptions," that attempts to relate how Inuit assess their own relationship to their lands and tries to show what the idea of "occupancy" really means. In attempting to come to terms with what land means to people of any culture, Brody chose not to present the information in his words, but rather in a discursive collection of native voice interspersed with commentary. He writes:

> All peoples feel that their lands have a richness and life that go far beyond themselves. No person's sense of himself has to do only with the present, nor with only his own people. His lands have been occupied by other generations, other peoples, and their marks are, in a way, some part of his own mark on the land. The past—even the remote past—enters the present, becomes part of it in stories, in myths, and in what is gathered together in the word "culture." When the Inuit of today tell their stories, talk about the past and about the first occupants of the Arctic, they are also talking about themselves. Their predecessors are a part of the place of which they are also now a part. When the Inuit travel their lands, they see everywhere evidence of peoples who travelled before them. There are old house sites, tent rings, stone cairns and bones. It is not a landscape moulded and shaped by occupation; there are no large mounds, fields or other geographical transformations that show what people have done. But it is a landscape dotted with, and given life by, the remnants of former peoples (Brody 1976: 186).

A series of quotes from various Inuit, on the subject of people from long ago, ends with the following comment by a resident of Baker Lake:

> To me the land is precious because it has been precious to the old Inuit. And the animals on the land are precious to me because they have been precious to Inuit of the past (Brody 1976: 191).

In response to this, Brody replies:

> Places and things that were made by or are strongly associated with people of long ago inspire feelings of awe, joy, or even fear. They command respect. They are details that tie the Inuit to their land, and the land to the Inuit (Brody 1976: 191).

Comments by Inuit regarding land and what it means invariably included reference to place names, and these, according to Brody, are central to Inuit land knowledge. He writes:

> Feeling for the land does not exist alone. It is a barometer of knowledge that is of day-to-day practical importance. Such knowledge is expressed directly by naming the land. ... Many of the names have meanings that seem to describe the surrounding land: Big Lake, Fast River, Huge Cliff or Reddish Place. These names are perhaps not so much real as they are descriptions of the land. In Inuttitut (sic), a proper name works grammatically in just the same way as any definite description: if the name is plural, then its verb is pluralized. So, for example, Inuit would say "Small Glaciers*are* on the west side of Navy Board Inlet," although in English, if "Small Glaciers" were a place name, the sentence would be " Small Glaciers *is*..."(Brody 1976: 196).

But at the root of Brody's analysis of what land means to the Inuit is a contention that the connection between people and place is life giving, life affirming and deeply spiritual in the sense that the land is the matrix on which all life for the Inuit is built. Here is an example of Brody's concluding statements:

> The land represents the values of the past and their continuity into the present. It represents security and all that is best about being Inuk. From the land come the best foods, and from knowledge of the land comes personal strength, as well as collective viability. The land gives identity, and it give purpose. Notions of land ownership may be unfamiliar, at least according to southern Canadian legal terms, but the feelings that an imagined loss of ownership inspire among the Inuit are acute and real. The tundra has not been shaped by ploughs; river banks have not been remade; fiords have not been fenced; whatever lives or grows in the north lives or grows according to natural laws over which the Inuit have exercised no control. But the uses to which generations of Inuit have put their land have left their own marks and signs. The people look upon it with no less feeling and attachment than would a farmer who regards

> his fields with satisfaction. For the land has given and, if Inuit are to endure, it will always give them life (Brody 1976: 202).

The land use maps themselves provide the most Thelon-specific information of all three volumes. In the period 1916-1956, the trapping maps indicate no fox trapping activity beyond the point at which the Thelon River flows into the west end of Beverly Lake. The hunting map of the same time period, however, shows caribou hunting occurring well west of Beverly Lake, in a broadly sweeping north/south arc that reaches west, up the Thelon River, to a point about 12 km upstream from Ursus Island and well into the Thelon Game Sanctuary. The period 1956-1974 map, by contrast, shows the western limit of fox trapping moved eastward to the other end of Beverly Lake and while the western limit of caribou hunt has moved eastward too in this period, the maps still indicate that caribou hunting has been done recently well within the boundary of the Sanctuary.

Another work by Brody (Brody 1975) provides powerful insights into the lives and concerns of Inuit in general. Even though these comments do not apply directly to the Inuit of the Thelon region, it is important to recognize that they are derived from discourse and experience that included time spent in Keewatin communities, including Baker Lake. Nominally, *The People's Land* is about Whites and the Eastern Arctic, but to tell this story, Brody is compelled to write a chapter about the *Inummariit*, the "real" Eskimos. He begins with this explanation:

> *Inuk* is Eskimo for an Eskimo. The plural, *Inuit*, means "people," and is the Eskimo word for Eskimos as a whole. By a process of adding middles and endings to a root, the Eskimo language uses single words that, when translated into English, can form long and grammatically complex sen-

> tences. A simple example is the Eskimo word for the Eskimo language—*Inuttitut: Inuk* or "the way a person does." Another simple example is *Inummarik* (genuine). The plural is *Inummariit*, "the real Eskimos." The combination of these two examples shows the structure of a third term, *inummarittitut: Inuk* (an Eskimo) + *marik* (real) + *titut* (in the manner of), hence "in the manner of a real Eskimo." Some people are said to eat, work, talk or even to walk *inummarittitut* (Brody 1975: 125).

In Brody, the point is that, to understand Inuit as they live now in communities, one must understand the way in which the old ways of life on the land—economic, familial and individual ways—are respected by the Inuit of today, young and old. According to Brody, Inuit conceptions of tradition, including connections to land, lie within the meaning of *Inummariit* or *Inummaritut*. This was a concept that allowed Brody to understand the seemingly nostalgic views of people he talked to in towns across the north. There is a connection to the land, even for young people in towns, that is linked to their recollection or knowledge of a way of life lived by their ancestors. A poignant example follows:

> In the old days, permanent Eskimo camps were small, usually with no more than two or three families, rarely as many as ten. They were scattered along the northern coast of North America and some of the Arctic islands, but, with the exception of the Caribou Eskimos, they were rarely sited inland. They were essentially base camps from which the hunters made long journeys inland or along the coast that lasted weeks or even months. When the Federal Government introduced its low-rental housing programme in the 1950s, some families chose to have their prefabricated timber-frame house built at their base camp rather than in one of the administrative centres. These houses were sometimes as far as 100 miles from the nearest settlement. Settlement Eskimos still identify themselves as the people of some place or other and, in answer to the conventional question, *Nani nunaqarpit?* ("Where do you have land?"), a man will give a résumé of all the places he *has* "had land." Some hunters were evidently more mobile than others and they might be vague about their base camp, but most of the people would answer that question with "In such a place I had land," and that place was a permanent camp (Brody 1975: 127).

Because of the interconnectedness of land knowledge and life on the land, in particular the way in which the young would be taught by the old during times when the older children and other adults would be working in camp or out hunting, a final section in Brody's chapter in the *Inummariit* also has relevance to this investigation. He writes:

> The smallness of the *Inummariit* community conditioned the relationships that existed among the families in it. They looked to one another for help. Indeed, they had a strong right, almost a legal right, to each other's help. In a camp, the Eskimos were their own masters, neither directly supported nor manipulated by outsiders. This sense of coherence and integrity was felt most strongly in family life. Eskimos today talk of ideal family relations; they recall a pattern and code of relationships that were distinctive and in many respects at odds with family life in the settlements. *Inummariit* have strong views on two closely connected aspects of family life in the camps: relations between generations, and marriage. The *Inummariit* hunters were men of great influence and authority, equipped by experience and ability to make decisions that affected the community and their own families. They expected, and they usually received, obedience; they did not assert their authority forcefully, but presumed it would be accepted. Younger and dependent persons were not bullied into accepting that authority, but they were expected to recognize its value for themselves. (137- 138)

A more recent book by Brody (Brody 1987) has allowed the seasoned northern author and ethnographer to reflect with further distance on the nature of all northern hunters, Indian and Inuit. *Living Arctic* is a visually pleasing volume with a strong ring of authenticity to it, and although it does not speak directly of Inuit connections to the Thelon Game Sanctuary, it provides important insights into Inuit connections to land generally. It is interesting that the chapters in this book—Stereotypes; Peoples; Cold; Meat; Animals; Mobility; Authority;. Children; Language; 'Tradition'; Frontiers; and The Politics of Survival—by avoidance of the issue or subject of *land* as a category of analysis, make a clear case for the integration of land and land knowledge in *every* aspect of Inuit life. In fact, there are references to land and land knowledge, many of them oblique, in every chapter and in almost every photograph of this book. Some examples follow:

> Hunters and trappers know about animals. Their knowledge is detailed and intimate. The details and intimacy are a personal science, a system of understanding that reveals and secures the peoples' absolute dependence on land (Brody 1987: 71).
>
> The so-called Caribou peoples of the Barren Grounds west of Hudson Bay, spend all year living inland. Their seasonal round is shaped by movements to different caribou migration routes and feeding areas. Abundance of lakes and relative proximity of the treeline mean that fishing and wood gathering have special importance. But the Caribou people have an annual round that has the same overall shape as the Inuit on the coast. They scatter from spring to autumn, and converge in larger groups each winter (Brody 1987: 93).
>
> Inuktitut makes a multitude of precise distinctions when it comes to descriptions of space. There, above your eye level and visible; there, below your eye level and not visible; there, close to you and visible; these here; those there. A complete list of all the exact terms for locating objects in space would be extremely long (Brody 1987: 151).
>
> Northern hunting societies' ways of life exist *with* the land. Health is based on connections between social and natural systems, between forms of authority, mobility, child-raising or language and meat, fish, trees, ice or the land itself. Such connections are not quaint or romantic; from them come individual strength, family happiness and the very tissue of culture; and upon them depends the future. When the connections are broken, modern ills begin. To resist these ills, and to repair the damage already caused by frontiers, has required modern politics. Yet the nature of the connections that these politics must seek to maintain or repair raises questions of authority and jurisdiction, questions about who will decide the shapes of social life and organization, as well as—perhaps because of—questions of ecology and environmental economics (Brody 1987: 229).

In conjunction with the Inuit Tapirisat's initiative to document Inuit land use and occupancy patterns, there was a parallel political process occurring that had as its goal the articulation of a plan for Inuit land claims. After years of negotiations that began in the early 1970s, around the same time the land use and occupancy project began (Duffy, 1988), in 1976 a draft agreement-in-principle between the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the Government of Canada, was published. This document lays out the intent of this agreement and continues with delineations of who is eligible, what the boundaries of the *Nunavut* (the proposed territory) would be, what animal harvesting and land use rights would come with the agreement, and other technical details, such as disbursement of royalties from mineral development, development of social and economic programs and plans for the establishment of an Inuit Development Corporation. Unfortunately, while land is the central issue of the agreement, there is very little in the document itself, besides the huge assumption that land is central to what is means to be an Inuk, that pertains to this study. Implicit in the document is the idea that land is *important* but *why* land is important is not considered in any detail. Although Quinn Duffy's book *The Road to Nunavut* (Duffy 1988) is an excellent background document to understanding the politicization of the Inuit from the second world war until contemporary times, explicit notions of Inuit land knowledge are illusive.

The politicization of land has, however, has given rise to a steady increase in awareness about Inuit concerns, especially those having to do with land, and this increase in public awareness was tied, at least in part, to a dramatic increase, beginning in the late 1970s, of printed publications featuring Inuit concerns. Government publications about Inuit concerns are produced for reasons of public information and/or public relations and promotion. Federal documents draw largely on existing ethnographies *and* on various programs and initiatives that might be current at any particular time. For example, as the Nunavut negotiations jelled, the Canadian Government felt it necessary to produce a booklet "for the benefit of those unfamiliar with traditional and contemporary Inuit ways" (Indian and Northern Affairs, 1986). Again, with little specifically here about land there were some interesting, if not informative generalizations:

> Today's Inuit strive to transmit the heritage of their ancestors to their children. Their success is partially measured by the degree to which all Inuit identify with the land and its natural resources. (6)
>
> The Inuit's lifestyle was so intimately linked to the natural world that killing animals was viewed as part of that natural relationship. In traditional hunting society, animals were believed to offer themselves to hunters. It was incumbent on the hunter to kill the animal and thus accept its gift. Indeed, it was considered a form of misuse if a hunter did not kill an animal in a time of need. (8)
>
> The Inuit, like members of all hunting societies, were trained from childhood to remember accurately and to absorb and retain small visual clues about the animals and the land. When tracking a polar bear, for example, the hunter had to distinguish—often at a great distance—the white lump of a polar bear from the white lump of a snow drift. By observing the animal at closer range, a hunter could determine the animal's age and sex. He could read its behaviour—behaviour that revealed whether the animal was hungry or tired, whether it would attack or run. Hunters could even predict how an animal would respond in certain weather conditions, for the weather influenced an animal's behaviour. (8)
>
> The Inuit had their own perception of time. For them, a day was not divided into hours, minutes and seconds. It was never considered too late or too early in the day to hunt. What determined the need to hunt was the availability of food. (9)

Much the same cultural and ethnographic information was included in an update of this booklet, entitled *The Inuit Way*. This publication, produced by the Native Citizen's Directorate of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, is slanted more to the White/Inuit interface in interpreting Inuit culture. Although information about land and land knowledge is general in nature and the same as written elsewhere, a final paragraph uses the *idea* of land in a way resonant with conversations that were part of this project:

> Inuit have become increasingly confident and sophisticated in their interactions with Quallunaat (white people) and their institutions. Inuit society is growing increasingly complex and changing rapidly as people are following the different avenues available to them. However, even the most successful Inuit, in southern terms, express the need to get back to their home communities and spend time "on the land" with other Inuit where they can truly relax and recharge their "cultural batteries." (Pauktuutit 1988: 19)

There is quite a range of available government publications of possible interest to this study, including community profiles and a variety of literature for and about tourism and development opportunities in the NWT. A 1986 publication, written in response to the European fur boycott, entitled *This land is our life*, is a glimpse of what Northern Aboriginals say when cornered with respect to land:

> The Northwest Territories is one of a very few populated places in the world that still reflects a natural balance between man and nature—a balance that its Inuit, Inuvialiut, Dene and Metis residents have respected from earliest times. The relationship is spiritual. It is on the land that aboriginal people gain a sense of achievement and identity from their traditional economy of hunting, trapping and fishing. The land and the people are one. Without this relationship, we would not have survived. (Bourque 1986: 3)

A second relevant government publication is the description of *Piniaqtavut*, an Integrated Program to enable educators in the north to offer children learning experiences that reflect the cultural and linguistic strength of the Inuit (Baffin Divisional Board of Education 1989). This document is useful because of the way in which it addresses the philosophical bases of the traditional Inuit way of knowing. But again, the voice the the southern outsider dominates, even though Inuit were part of the writing team.

The *only* place in which Inuit land sensitivities have emerged in equal voice with the southern interpreter is a ground-breaking bachelor's thesis by a Trent University geography student entitled "Appropriate Education for the Inuk Geographer" (Beardsall 1987). The most interesting element of this Keewatin research is a 33-page "Dictionary of Inuk Geography," an exhaustive series of terms having to do with matters of land and air and sea and people that clearly illustrates the level of detail in Inuit land knowledge. While referring to Southampton Island, it demonstrates a way of land knowing that was in force in the Thelon region as well. Here, by way of example, are terms that have to do with snow:

> manngumaaq: snow which has been softened by warm weather.
> mannguq: melting snow
> mannguutirpuq: a fine soft spring snowfall.
> masak: falling snow which is wet.
> matsaq: slush.
> mingulik: a fine coat of powdery snow.
> natiruvaaq: fine snow which is entrained by the wind, or drift snow.
> niiqurtuq: snow which snaps under foot.
> piirqusirvigivaa: snow which falls in whirlwinds.
> piirturiniq: a thin coat of light, soft snow deposited on an object or on ice by a snow flurry.
> qakirtaq: snow which is worn by the wind.
> qannialaaq: light falling snow.
> qanniapaluk: very light falling snow which is still in the air.
> qannik: snow which falls.
> qanniq: snowfall.
> qannitaq: snow which has recently fallen to the ground; to be covered with fresh snow.
> qimmaku: snow with salt deposits near shore ice.
> qimutjuk: snow striae made by a gale.
> qimutsiriaq: snow of sufficient quantity to travel with a qamutiq.
> situuttuq: snow or stones or soil that falls in an avalanche.
> tittaurartipaa: snow that is carried off continually by the wind.
> uniqraq: trace of a sled in the snow.

urqusiirtutuq: a flurry of snow.

What is interesting about this work by Beardsall is the way in which Inuit linguistic knowledge of snow is revealed to a geographic audience for the first time. It is my contention that, on the basis of this investigation, similar levels of subtlety and detail exist for many other land-related categories of knowing; as such Beardsall's work represents the tip of a very large body of knowledge.

Other scenarios have given rise to evidence about Inuit attachment to land, and given voice to Inuit perspectives. Arima (1984) mentions a situation that emerged in the 1970s with respect to the mining of uranium in the vicinity of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. The mining issue has been the one stimulus in contemporary times that has brought the Inuit of Baker Lake out to speak of their love of land and their hopes for its continued good health. According to Arima, rich uranium deposits were discovered on the upper Thelon River in 1978 and,

> This intense uranium exploration by aircraft so disturbed the caribou that the Baker Lake Inuit and Inuit Tapirisat took six mining companies and the Canadian government to court in 1979 seeking an injunction against further mining exploration. But in this, the first case in Canada to discuss Inuit aboriginal rights, the judge ruled that although about 30,000 square miles of the District of Keewatin were subject to the rights of the Baker Lake Inuit, such were not property rights, since these had been handed over to the Hudson's Bay Company by King Charles II in 1670 (Arima 1984: 461).

Subsequent exploration and development activity in the area south of Shultz Lake led to the announcement in the early 1980s that Urangesellschaft (Canada, Limited) was planning to open a uranium mine. The first public response to this proposal was by Greenpeace and another environmental group called Nuclear Free North. Because of virulent negative reaction to Greenpeace following the collapse of the European fur market, initial reactions to the uranium mining proposal were focused as much on Greenpeace as they were on issues of land and land use. A short excerpt from an editorial in the Keewatin Inuit Association newsletter illustrates this point:

> The Keewatin Inuit Association representing the Keewatin Inuit is not prepared, at this time, to embrace the stand taken by these groups just on their say so. ... Greenpeace's concern over the environment of our region and the well being of its inhabitants is questionable. Past experiences raise the question of whether they have our best interests at heart. ... People have been made to think that any development is bad for us and to me that is suspect. (Keewatin Inuit Association 1988: 7)

A whole series of environmental assessments (UG 1986) and public consultations were conducted[72] and there was an outpouring of concern about the mine and the mining process that forced Urangesellschaft to backpeddle with plans. Ultimately, a press release was issued that put the project on hold indefinitely:

> The company does not wish to proceed with the project unless the concerns raised by the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office Panel can be satisfactorily addressed and the concerns of the federal, territorial, regional and hamlet authorities have been resolved. We take very seriously the issues raised by the FEARO Panel, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Federal Government agencies, as well as the concerns voiced by the residents of Baker Lake and the Keewatin Region. They must be addressed if the project is to proceed (UG 1990: 1).

Although Baker Lake residents' comments about the mine were largely off the record, it became apparent subsequently that the presence of the mine proposal in the cultural milieu of Baker Lake caused much ferment and much discussion. In fact, for some residents, the mine may have galvanized opinion about land in a way that it had never before been verbalized.

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[72] Unfortunately as yet, if transcripts of these hearings were made, they have not been located.

A letter to the editor of *Caribou News* illustrates the depth of concern of one Baker Lake resident as it relates to the proposed uranium mine:

> Dear Editor:
>
> I would like to tell Inuit and non-Inuit, through *Caribou News*, that the proposed Kiggavik mine project near Baker Lake should not be permitted to go ahead. This land belongs to me—it is where I was born and grew up. I have always resided in the Baker Lake area. We Inuit have always used the surrounding land, during the summer and winter months, and we are opposed to any changes to what is ours.
>
> Although the people who want to build the mine at Kiggavik say there will be no dangers to residents and wildlife, I do not believe them. They cannot always know about possible changes in the air and wildlife.
>
> Michael Stuart, vice president of Urangesellschaft Canada, was wrong when he said in a *Caribou News* interview [December 1989 issue]: "Kiggavik is not situated in the direct [caribou] migration route, though ... we do get some caribou coming through that area." Caribou *do* migrate immediately to the east and west of Kiggavik, so what he said is not true. I know the surrounding land he refers to, because I was born and grew up there, using caribou for sustenance, as I still do.
>
> We Inuit who were born here, like those who lived before us and those who will in the future, use the land and wildlife. And the land will support us for many years to come if it is not ruined, and the caribou will always be abundant. Even now as I sit writing this letter, there is a large herd of caribou stretching from the shore of Schultz Lake to Aberdeen Lake. This is the way it has always been, even though in some years there might be fewer caribou migrating through that area. The caribou do not stay in one area for long, except during the very cold winter months, when they may stay in one area for awhile. They do not go far from where they are wintering for four months—November, December, January and February. Then, during March, the herd starts migrating to cleaner and fresher lands.
>
> Mr. Stuart seems convinced that the Kiggavik area is not part of the caribou migration route. And so the people who are proposing to put a mine at Kiggavik—because of their lack of knowledge—may be unaware that they will be ruining the land. Since November to now [February], Schultz Lake, where we hunt caribou, is where the herd has been wintering. In early spring, they'll start migrating through the proposed project area.
>
> Do those people really want to destroy the lives of the people of Baker Lake? What Inuk wants to live in a land that has been ruined? Who would want to use anything that has been destroyed or made useless?
>
> I accompanied a group of people, by plane, to where the mining exploration work is going on, and I did not like what I saw. The land is all turned up and made useless for wildlife there. It's obvious that when they really start mining operations, a huge

amount of land will be completely ruined along with the waters and the wildlife. Why do they want to do that? The mine will only be in operation for fifteen years, while the land could remain productive indefinitely if it isn't destroyed.

People of the North have heard numerous times through the news media about forest fires in the south that destroy the land and other things. There is no doubt that there will eventually be shortages of available food, if that is really what's been happening. Soon there could be only a few farmlands left because the rest of the land has been made useless. We do not want *our* land to be destroyed, nor the wildlife that inhabit it. Our land can be used to nurture the wildlife, and therefore provide other Canadians with food. Wildlife numbers can increase, and even if at times the caribou herds may decline, if the land is preserved their numbers will eventually grow again.

Mr. Stuart also has made convincing speeches by saying that a large number of people will be employed by the mine, making good money. But I know that the people of Keewatin will not be able to fill many of those jobs because of their lack of formal education that will be required. In order for anyone to work with dangerous equipment and such, university or college degrees or other high levels of training are needed. To date, there has never been an operation of this sort in the Keewatin area.

I do not want someone from the outside coming to our land to operate something threatening.

John Killulark (1990)
Baker Lake, NWT

Interestingly, as the mine controversy was going on in Baker Lake, there were other events on northern policy and other land-related events in the ongoing establishment of Inuit land claims. The powerful connection between people and land *demonstrated* by the Inuit of Baker Lake with respect to the idea of mining uranium in the area was articulated at the same time by the then-president of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. Rhoda Innuksuk made the following remarks at the Arctic Policy Conference held in conjunction with the 1985 Inuit Circumpolar Conference: "The heart of the Inuit culture and identity is the relationship of Inuit to the land, the sea, the ice, and the creatures that live on or in it" (Innuksuk 1987).

We are now at a very exciting stage in the literary history of the Inuit, in the sense that published works in English and Inuktitut have reached the point that writing *by* Inuit is gaining a presence that will soon eclipse writing *about* matters of northern culture. Bilingual magazines like *Inuit Today* and *Inuktitut* are getting the life stories and life images of elders in print in English and Inuktitut, in black and white and in colour. Early collections like *First People, First Voices* (Petrone 1983) and *Poems of the Inuit* (Columbo 1982) popularized and brought together for re-publishing writing that had been lost in the dusty ethnographic annals. But now, volumes like *Northern Voices: Inuit Writing in English* (Petrone 1988), along with fiction by Inuit writers like Michael Kusugak (*Evolution on the Fast Track*, in press), and published impassioned speeches by Inuit leaders are starting to place the old stories and the new stories derived of Inuit experience and culture in public view. Unfortunately, as with most of the stories collected by Rasmussen, I have found little of direct significance to this project. All of the material speaks of Inuit relationship with land, but none of it specifically, as yet, deals with the Thelon Game Sanctuary. This work stands, however—even the comic and video exploits of Inuit super hero Super Shamou[73] who reminds children of connections to land, food and traditional values—as a solid validation of previous claims about Inuit connections to land.

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[73] Super Shamou—aka Peter Tapatai, of Qamanittuaq—was created by the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation in the form of a series of vidio vignettes that ran, in the late 1980s, on CBC Northern Service. In the early 1990s the character of Super Shamou was written into a poster and comic book series, produced by the GNWT Department of Social Services, to encourage young Inuit to live a healthy lifestye.

Experiential Text from Qamanittuaq

Qamanittuaq—Baker Lake— is a community of about 1000 people, located at the geographic centre of Canada, 1625 km due north of Winnipeg, on a widening of the Thelon River as it makes its way out Chesterfield Inlet to Hudson Bay. It is the only inland Inuit community in the Northwest Territories.

My prior experience in Baker Lake before returning for this research was one short visit at the end of a six-week 1983 canoe trip on the Thelon River, and one two-month period of residency, with my family, as Base Camp Manager for a 1988 international archaeological expedition (Raffan 1989; Stewart and Pelly 1990; Hanks and Pelly 1991) which conducted the first comprehensive archaeological survey of Caribou Inuit sites on the Kazan River. During these visits, I learned something of the life these people had on the land, about their dependence on the caribou and about the Caribou Inuit people who had starved on the land throughout the 20th century, some as late as 1958. And, through opposition to a uranium mine that was being developed in the 1980s, I learned something of the fierce and abiding attachment the Caribou Inuit have for their land. The Baker Lake segment of this research began in on August 6th, 1991 after spending time alone in the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

I arrived from Yellowknife as a stray passenger on a Twin Otter aircraft chartered to take guests and supplies to Sila Lodge on Wager Bay, 340km northeast of Baker Lake. Approaching the community from the west by air, even at low altitude, one had to look hard to make out the community buildings against the expanses of gently sloping tundra on the north shore of the lake. The temperature when we landed was 28° Celsius.

The first night back in Baker Lake was hot. Although by 10:45 P.M. the sun had set, leaving an iridescent white sky and even brighter white lake surface rolled out before the community, the air was still and muggy. It was the last day of summer holidays, and as the curfew siren wailed at ten o'clock to let everyone under 16 know that it was time to be inside, there was a community cacophony of rips, snorts and roars from a herd of four-wheeled all-terrain-vehicles tearing around the town in last ditch celebration of summer. It was quieter after ten, but not much. Slowly, the sound of beach-combing gulls and idly barking dogs became audible as the last of the ATVS was parked for the night. It was good to be back in Baker Lake.

Although it had taken nearly four months to get a reply, I felt secure in arriving at the community with a letter of support from the mayor and hamlet council, saying that they had read my proposal with interest and were keen to see the work proceed. One of the first people with whom I connected on arrival was Mayor Garry Smith, a local contractor and businessman. He was cordial but told me that he was not keen to draw the council together to say or hear anything more about my research. "I don't want to get the council together to discuss your project. We approved it earlier. It's hard enough to get them together for our regular meetings. They're all volunteer, you know. But it's not that they are not interested," he explained. Smith said that a one-page progress report would be a nice thing to present to council at the regular meeting that was to occur at the end of the month. In contrast to the conditions placed on my research activity by the Band Council in Lutsel K'e, the Hamlet Council of Baker Lake, through the mayor, seemed supportive but almost indifferent to the work. Suggesting a possible reason for this, one Baker Lake resident told me "We've seen quite a few researchers here over the years. They come and they go and we people don't pay much attention."

My one central contact in town was a woman called Hattie Mannik, who was the lead hand in an ongoing oral history project in the town. Working with a publisher and a white woman from Winnipeg, she had been interviewing elders with a view to producing a book of stories. Although I had not met Hattie during previous visits, I had corresponded with her about the prospect of collaboration, feeding my research into hers and vice versa. When I had tea with Hattie and spoke about the possibilities, any enthusiasm for such collaboration had waned considerably. She would be happy to receive tapes and transcripts of my conversations with elders, but she was too busy with her own work to participate in my research in any way, and it would not be possible for any of her transcripts to be included in this research. Hattie, however, was a key person in this research to the extent that she helped by suggesting other interpreters and possible assistants, and by agreeing to accept copies of my tapes and transcripts. This would allow me to assure consultants that their words would stay in town with the person who was known to be the oral history buff.

To give a flavour of the first two days back in Baker Lake, journal notes reveal that, in addition to visits with Hattie, I toured the town and made contacts that established a logistical base for the work:

- 1000 hrs: Visited Economic Development Officer Silas Arngna'naaq to say hello and to make contact with one of the government departments who had funded the research through a contract to design part of the Baker Lake Visitor's Centre. Checked in with Yellowknife contact in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism by fax.

- 1130 hrs: Reported in to the local RCMP detachment to close out my wilderness travel plan, filed in Yellowknife. Had this not been done, they would have gone looking for me in the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

- 1230 hrs: Went by to see Inuit Broadcasting Corporation employee Peter Tapatai to see if his boat was afloat and still for hire. Learned that he was out picking up a film crew on the Kazan River.

- 1500 hrs.: Had tea with local craftsperson and friend Linda Porte to see about getting muskox underfur and local lichen dyes for the Visitors Centre Display. Learned that her husband Peter, Supervisor of Schools for the Keewatin District Board of Education, was away in Rankin Inlet until Thursday. My meeting with him about making a curriculum supplement book out of conversation with elders would have to wait.

- 1700 hrs.: Visited the house of John Pudnak, a possible interpreter for the project. He was asleep.

- 0830 hrs: Returned to Mayor Smith's office to enquire about his interest in being a consultant to the research. Mayor Smith out.

- 0930 hrs: Visited the Northern Store (formerly the Bay) to say hello to Manager Alan Hart, get some money, and to locate the key for the old warehouse that is to become the Baker Lake Visitors Center. Got a sheaf of very tired notes that would all eventually find their way back into the Northern Store till, and learned that Al Lehere of Baker Lake Construction and Supply Company has warehouse key.

- 1100 hrs: Ran into two English canoeists on the main street, Tom Dent and Kevin Goik. They have paddled from Yellowknife to Baker Lake, having spent time in Snowdrift, Lynx Lake Lodge. They agree to be interviewed about their experiences in the Thelon Game Sanctuary, but smell so rancid that I must find a venue for the interview other than my hosts' house to spare Rob and Karen the olfactory insult.

- 1200 hrs: Back to IBC. Peter Tapatai is still out.

- 1300 hrs: Presented myself to BLCS office to get the warehouse key. It's not there. Lehere is curious about the authority under which I'm asking. I mention connection with Silas Arngna'naaq and the Department of Economic Development. He nods and invites me to join him on a drive to the local gravel pit to get the key from his foreman's key ring.

- 1430 hrs: Run into Orin Durey, a line pilot for Aero Arctic Helicopter Services. He's the fellow I met in the Wildcat Café in Yellowknife. He's working with land survey officers south of the Thelon. There's a chance I'll be able to join them for a day of flying to interview his DIAND employers. He gives me his card with number in Rankin Inlet.

- 1530 hrs: Back to interpreter John Pudnak's house. Now he is out.

- 1630 hrs: Back to Rob and Karen's house to see about how we're going to sort out food and lodging.

I had learned in Lutsel K'e that there was absolutely no advantage in trying to rush the community work; in fact, there were reasons to go slowly, quietly and as if there was all the time in the world to complete the project. Previous experience in Baker Lake and earlier community work in this research had taught me that.

During the early days at Baker Lake, I visited the Thomas Tapatai Library and read some interesting materials about the community. One booklet *BAKER LAKE: A Community Study* (Zozula 1981) was especially interesting. It began with a map that showed the three main regions from which the Caribou Inuit came to the community of Baker Lake: the Kazan River area, the Back River area, and the Thelon River area. The map implied that "local" land use reaches west up the Thelon about two lengths of Beverly Lake to a point on the river about Lookout Point. Ursus Island and the Tamarvi River, although not named, were clearly shown on the map.

The booklet had a section on traditional camp life, which contained very cursory information under the following headings: homes—iglus in winter, skin tents in summer; migration—follow fox and caribou; transport—winter by foot or dog sled, summer kayak; clothing—caribou skins; food—caribou and fish; roles—men hunt/trap, women cook/care/sew; traditional government—"unwritten" rules.

Of particular interest in the community study were two traditional campsites marked within the boundaries of the Sanctuary: one between Beverly and Aberdeen Lakes and one that appeared to be on the Thelon River right at the big corner on the river that is east and downstream of Ursus Island.

The booklet went on to detail the four different groups that had come together in Baker Lake: the Sanninajurmiut—the Garry Lake (Back River) People; the Qairnirmiut—the Baker Lake People; the Tariurmiut—the Coastal People; the Akilinarmiut—the Aberdeen Lake People; and the Akilinirnmiut—the Beverly Lake People. By description, although presumably all of these groups had family history of travel to the Thelon area, the Akilinirnmiut were the only ones who the booklet detailed as actually using the lands of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. It said of the Akilinirnmiut: "These people lived north of Beverly Lake. They travelled west on the Thelon River to a place where there were trees. In winter they followed the caribou herd" (Zozula 1981: 17). There was also mention of the last of these people moving into town in 1959.

The Baker Lake community study booklet, although simply put together and only mimeographed (making the pictures come out smudged and very difficult to see), was the first document I had seen that was actually derived from the people in town. It had an authentic ring and feel to it that caught my attention. It gave glimpses of all aspects of community life, including a special elders' group called *Qilautimiut*, the people of the drum. This club, the booklet said, was formed in 1972, through Adult Education. Apparently the old people of the community asked to form a club with the purpose of having a feast once a month as an excuse to get together to talk and play traditional games. And the Qilautimiut were responsible for starting a local business called Inuit Pitquosi to make traditional games and tools for distribution to schools across the territories. This outfit also put together another booklet called *Northern People*, which told the stories of four Baker Lake people. Unfortunately during my remaining time in Baker Lake, I was unable to find evidence of the games or the tools or Inuit Pitquosi. The ongoing existence of Qilautimiut, however, I interpreted as a throwback to the cultural position elders occupied in more traditional times. My encounter with James Upajaq, the vice-president of the elder's group, helped me see the symbolic and functional role of this group in the essential decision-making process currently employed in the community.

The pivotal meeting that got the research rolling was not, as in Snowdrift, getting permission to proceed from the Hamlet council. It was as if the people of Baker Lake, as represented by the mayor and council, had not the same sense of propriety over their land knowledge. The pivotal event in getting the research underway was finding and securing the services of the best possible interpreter. I eventually connected with John Pudnak who came to my house and agreed to take on the job of interpreting. But he agreed to do much more than interpret, in accepting responsibility for contacting and setting up interview times with the various people who would contribute to this research.

The first step in getting underway was to get together with John and to explain to him in great detail what I was hoping to learn while in Baker Lake. He listened with patience, interest, and understanding. I showed him on the maps the areas I was interested in, and why it was important to talk to people who had either experience in or knowledge of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Then, to help him understand the interview process I was intending to use, I interviewed John in the manner I was intending to use with all consultants. I began telling him the uses to which our conversation would be put. It was a pleasure to be able to say that the work was being done under licence with the Science Institute of the NWT, that it was endorsed by the mayor and council and that copies of the tapes and transcripts would be kept in town with Hattie Mannik. And before we talked about his land experience with the Thelon I asked that as he was now aware of how I intended to use the conversation, was he willing to continue? He agreed. We talked further, and at the end of the conversation, to complete the model I was trying to establish in John's mind, I asked if there was anything he had said that he didn't want repeated. The final step in the interview process was to ask permission to take his portrait. Following this encounter we met again and decided, based on John's knowledge of the community, on a rough list of possible consultants. John made the final schedule and arrangements with these people, shooting first for people who had actually grown up in the Thelon area, second for people who knew the area from personal experience, and third for people who could speak clearly about Inuit land values in general.

From the very beginning, John was a delight to work with. As it turned out, he had done a variety of jobs in his 57 years, including being the first English/Inuktitut translator for the GNWT. Once I was sure that John understood and had some sense of personal commitment to the project, and after we had spoken about possible people to talk to in town, he took on the task of choosing consultants. I was satisfied that he understood what needed to be done for the research and that he was the best person to shape the constellation of elders who would contribute to it. With John's patient and diligent work, in one way or another 25 different consultants contributed to this work. For three weeks, with John as guide and interpreter, we were able to create the Baker Lake oral history base for this project that is detailed in the second part of this chapter.

People in Baker Lake were very cordial, and outside the rubric of the research there was much to be learned. A local teacher, for example gave me a copy of our national anthem in Inuktitut:

> un Kanata, nangminiq nunavut
> piqujatit, naalatsiaqpavut,
> angivalliajutit
> sangijuublutillu,
> nangiqpugut, uu kanata
> mianiriblutit
>
> uu kanata, nunatsiaq,
> nangiqpugut mianiriblutit,
> uu kanata saalagijauqunak

My hosts left Baker Lake on the 12th of August, leaving me alone in their house with 140 packing boxes (permission had been granted for me to stay for the duration of my research). The beauty of solitude in a project like this is that the times between interviews could be spent digesting and pondering the substance and context of the people and the place. The day after their departure, I arose early and spent several hours going over my notes and listening to music. A journal entry that followed:

13 August 2:30 P.M.
It has been an extended musical reverie today. Listening to a variety of music on the dual-purpose SONY WMD-3 oral history recorder. I've been reading, thinking, puttering and generally exploring within the limits of my own little world. Already it's 2:30 and I couldn't care less. This first day without Rob and Karen and Ben (their 2-year-old son) and the frenzied bustle of their packing has been a quiet and joyful one. I feel attached to the ground today. Stan Rogers has just finished a stirring reprise of the song Molly (my daughter) calls "Northwest Sausage."

> Oh for just one time
> I would take the Northwest Passage
> To find the hand of Franklin
> Reaching for the Beaufort Sea

Tracing one warm line
Through a land so wide and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea.

Revisiting this entry and remembering the situation and the song while writing this document, I find the tune as compelling as ever, but the lyrics grate against the prevailing context in Baker Lake. Nobody in Qamanittuaq "takes" anything, especially from the land. And while the "hand of Franklin" has been an enduring and powerful symbol for nearly two centuries in the European and Euro-Canadian consciousness, he is certainly not a topic of conversation or even a scratch on people's imagination there. People may have heard of Samuel Hearne, but Franklin ... Who? And as for the land being wide and savage, the spaces between places of comfort for people used to town or city life are certainly "wide", but for the Caribou Inuit the world of the Barrens—their world—is a reticule of songs, stories, place names, and personal experience. This place is home, and from what I've learned, the land is neither "wide," nor "savage" from the Inuit perspective.

John's contribution to the research grew day by day as he made contact with the elders and set up times and circumstances for conversations. Compared to my experience with a much younger interpreter in Lutsel K'e, I got the sense that working with a man of John's senior position in the community made a difference in the elders' perception of our project. John was a trusted member of the community and when he said that the work would be useful for Hattie Mannik, for use in the local school, and that he saw value in my research, people seemed to listen, and most often got caught in his interest for the work. Hattie Mannik's father, Silas Putumiraqtuq's response was typical: He said, "Sure, you can come and speak with me. Of course you can come. You can come every day this week if you like. I'm very happy to speak with you."

Later in the same conversation, we chatted, John sitting there wearing his ATV helmet over his black baseball cap. I asked if I could pay him for the work he had done to date, who we might speak to next and when. Journal notes pick up the story there:

> John sat there looking at his calendar as we spoke about who we might talk to this week. He casually remarked 'It's hard to keep track of days. Inuit don't normally keep track of days. Seasons yes. Days no. It's only when you have to fill out time cards that you have to keep track of days.'

Along the way with John in the community, and on my own, I spoke casually with many people and heard lots of interesting snippets that could not be set to paper with attribution. I learned that Caribou Inuit generally won't search inland for caribou, that they will go where caribou cross rivers or lakes and wait, when hunting, and that this was why the Akiliniqmiut especially found it difficult to leave crossing places in the Thelon watershed. I learned that summer camp places, such as those up the Thelon, had names derived of the life cycle of the caribou that told not only that the caribou would be there, but at what time of year—*Kanngaluaanniaqviit* meaning "caribou are shedding and crossing," and *Atiqtuqsiuquilt* meaning "caribou walking and crossing while there is a lot of snow, where the snow hasn't melted yet although it's spring now but there is lots of snow." People said that before qablunaat ways, a couple would think about what to name a child. They would think about elders, deceased or still alive. The couple dreams about naming the child and dreams about that person and name the child after the one they dream about. I learned that some of the elders in town still remember shamanic practices on the land that happened before the arrival of Europeans and that some of these were for healing—for example, using a fresh lemming skin as a compress to drain a boil—and some were for purposes that the people never ascertained. Tangential references were made to the famines and starvation periods in the 50s and earlier during which people died, but that this was *ajurnarmat*, something that can't be helped so there is no point in losing anymore sleep over it. And I came across a story to which I could relate as a canoeist.

Two hunters were out hunting on the big lakes on the Thelon, west of Baker Lake. They were skinning out animals on the shore when they saw what they thought was a big bull caribou swimming away out in the lake. They quickly finished what they were doing, jumped in the boat and took after the animal. One hunter was in the bow with his rifle at the ready, the other was driving the motor canoe. As they roared across the lake, the hunter in the front got ready to fire, but in front of their eyes, the image they took for a caribou at first turned into two men in a canoe. The boat driver could speak some English, so they pulled up beside the canoe. Apparently all the canoeists could do, having been delivered from the business end of an approaching rifle, was to sit with heads bowed saying "yeah ... yeah."

I was struck by the sense in which this story served to highlight the awakening of two groups of people, from two different cultures, both on the land in a boat, and both thinking themselves alone, or at least beyond the presence of other folk. As a reminder to myself of cultural overlap and how what one sees may not be what actually happens to be the case, I sat for a few moments and responded to this story in visual form (see Figure 9 on page 258).

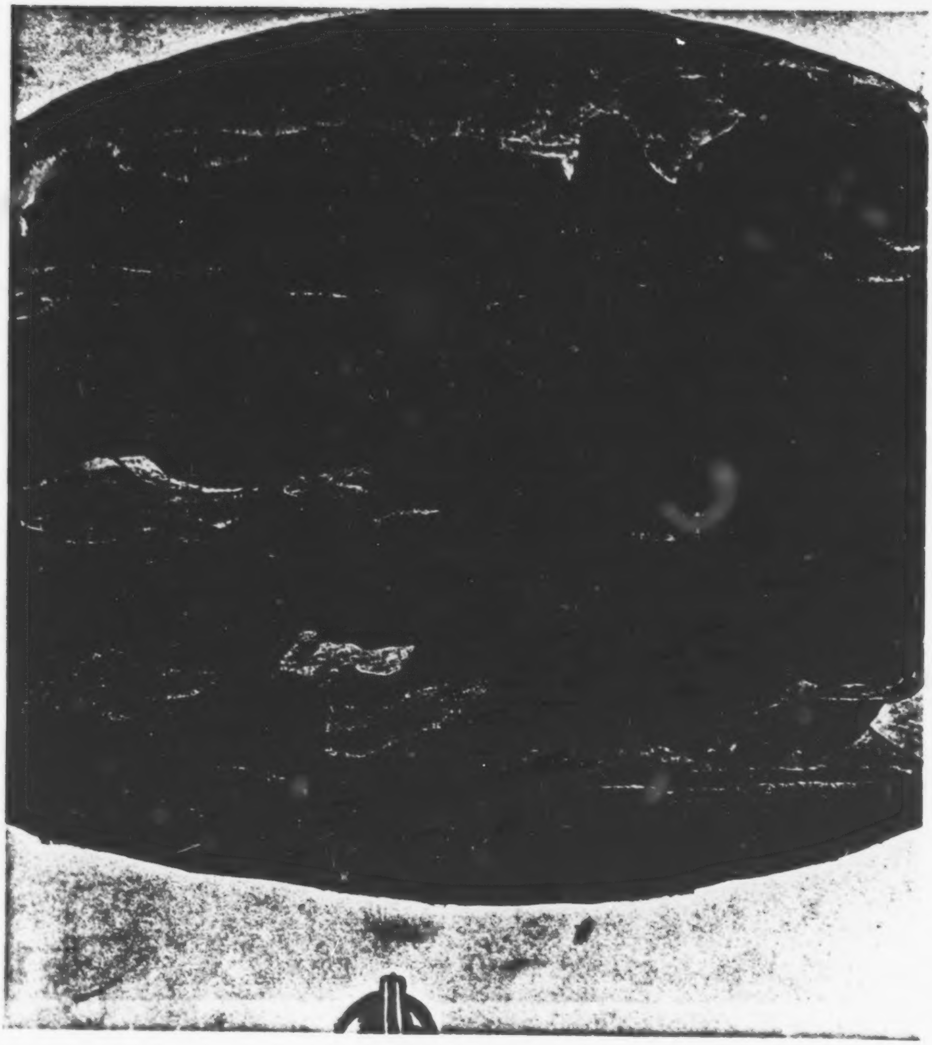

Figure 9. **Caribou or Canoe:** What you see is not necessarily what you get. Inuit hunters mistake two paddlers and a canoe for a big bull caribou swimming in a lake. All the canoeists can say on being delivered from their *prey* position is "Yeah, yeah."

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The day we were supposed to speak with Luke Arngna'naaq, John arrived late to say that Luke had gone out on some kind of rescue mission to pick up some people who were stuck on the land. John said that it was probably just as well because he had been up until 3:30 A.M. because he and his wife Vera, a drug and alcohol counsellor in town, were helping a couple who were "at each other," a situation presumably exacerbated by drugs or alcohol. John went on to say that the advent of direct flight from Yellowknife to Baker Lake had become a problem because people could order liquor by phone and have it shipped on the Ptarmigan Airways "sked"[74] on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Before the Ptarmigan skeds, liquor used to come to Baker Lake via Rankin Inlet from Winnipeg. It took time and was much more difficult to get. When the direct flights started, people were able to wire money to the Yellowknife liquor outlet through the Northern Store in Baker Lake. The Northern Store was encouraged to stop this practice, but John explained that liquor remains a growing problem in Baker Lake.

It was ironic that John mentioned this business about liquor around the same time I was hearing from other people in the community about revelations of various kinds of violence and abuse in Baker Lake. A teenage girl had been apprehended for abusing children in the local daycare, and the investigation of this situation helped uncover a sleeping monster in the community in the form of a longtime resident and trusted Oblate priest who had been systematically abusing girls and boys for years. The priest left town on "educational leave" before the story broke, but had to return to answer charges in Northwest Territorial court in the Iglu Hotel. One person told me of her utter revulsion when the priest came to town for his trial wearing a lapel button that said, "Everyone makes mistakes." But even the priest was included in a tradition in town, through which, when someone is sentenced to jail (the priest was given five years), people give them money, gum, cigarettes and tobacco on their way out of the courtroom. That level of forgiveness surprised me.

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[74] Meaning scheduled flight.

People told me that since then a number of other adults and children have come forward with other stories of abuse. It is clear that there is a rocky road ahead for the community on this score. As I tried to make sense of this information, one resident said something that helped put the abuse in at least a loose and untested, but tenable perspective. The person observed that for women in town who still bear and nurture children, filling roles of mother and spouse, life in the community is contextually different from life on the land, but quite similar in terms of role and expectation of contribution to the cultural milieu. The men, by contrast, who were once proud patriarchs—hunters, providers, decision-makers—have no such clout in town, disempowered by lack of wage work and limited educational possibilities against a foreign cultural backdrop. It occurs to me that the abuse may be an insidious symptom of a complex and hidden cause which is a culture that is displaced and translocated from their life with and on the land. If life on the land allowed the social structures to evolve setting out the established roles for men and women, breaking that connection to the land seems to have had dire consequences.

The opportunities for getting out on the land with the people of Qamanittuaq were few. Initial arrangements had been made with Tom and Becky Kudloo, proprietors of Ekaluk Lodge on Schultz Lake, to spend some time at their establishment and to travel with Basil Tuluktuk, one of their guides and a man who had

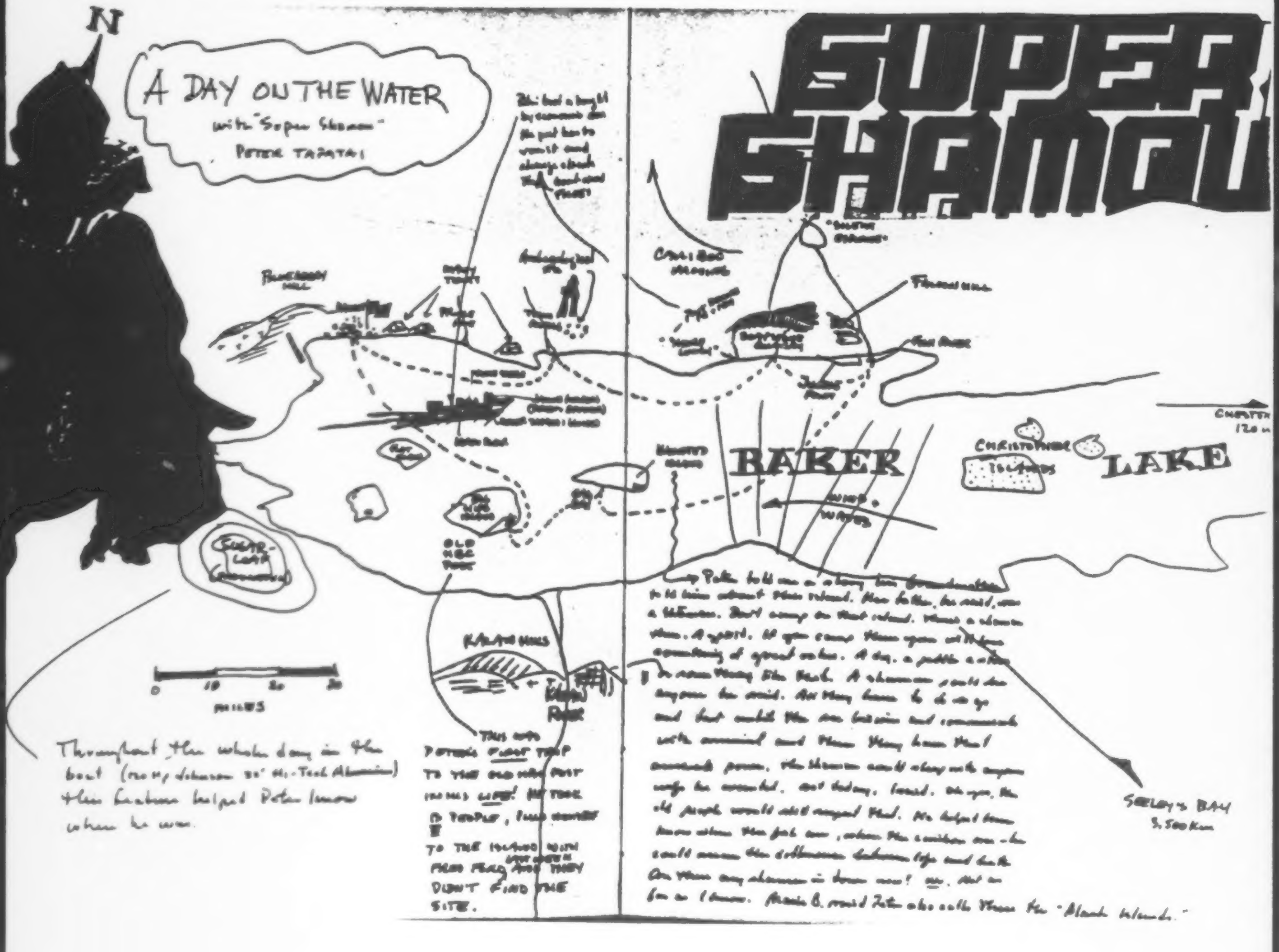
N
A DAY ON THE WATER
with "Super Shaman"
PETER TAPATAI
SUPER
SHAMA
BAKER
LAKE
WIND + WATER
OLD HBC POST
SEELEY'S BAY
3,500 Km
0
10
20
30
MILES
Throughout the whole day in the boat (... Johnson 30' Hi-Tech Aluminum) the features helped Peter know where he was.
THIS WAS PETER'S FIRST TRIP TO THE OLD HBC POST ... HE TOOK ... PEOPLE, ... TO THE ISLAND WITH ... AND THEY DIDN'T FIND THE SITE.

Figure 10. A Day on the Water: A day on the waters of Baker Lake turns into a lifetime of stories and connections to the land—Twin River archaeological site, a soapstone quarry, Fish River, Haunted Island, HBC Post ruin on Big Hips Island and home to Baker Lake.

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been born in the Sanctuary. Unfortunately, because of the mixup with my pickup inside the Sanctuary—circumstances which forced a return to Yellowknife—this visit never materialized. For the rest of the people in the hamlet, getting out onto the land meant travelling by boat to locations near the community in Baker Lake itself. I was fortunate to be able to spend a day travelling with by boat with Peter Tapatai and visiting many of the important sites on Baker Lake within a 100 km radius of town (see Figure 10 on page 261).

I had met Peter on previous visits to Qamanittuaq and knew of his fame as a television super hero, incarnated as Super Shamou, a sort of northern superman and saviour of children from all manner of harm. But in the summer of 1991, Peter had received a grant from the Government of the Northwest Territories, Economic Development Department to purchase a large sea-going aluminum boat for the purposes of starting a tourism business based in Baker Lake. Peter was anxious to get this operation underway and offered to "take you anywhere you want to go."

We left the community and headed east along the north shore of the lake, stopping at Twin Rivers archaeological site, the local soapstone quarry, and at a favourite fishing place near Falcon Hill. From there we struck out across the wide expanse of Baker Lake until we were in view of the other shore, and then headed west, passing Haunted Island and stopping at the old HBC post on Ikpiktuyuk Island.

The journey was instructive in a number of ways. Waiting for Peter at the main wharf in town early in the morning, I became aware in a new way of all of the winter and summer conveyances—boats and snowmachines—littered all along the beach. I had walked past these on many occasions, but this time considered the vast number of these vehicles as indication of just how many people have the ability, at least, of leaving town when they so decide, or have the money to do so. Getting out on the land is something that was espoused as being important by most of the people to whom I spoke, but this was evidence of the scale of such activity. When Peter arrived and we finally got under way, the first thing I noticed when we got out of sight of the community was the large number of tents—summer camps—that dotted the entire length of the north shore of the lake. I spoke to Peter about this as we wailed along in front of his brand new twin 70 horsepower outboards, and he allowed me to see that for many residents of Baker Lake the experience of getting out on the land has been truncated into an almost symbolic series of forays to camps like these, for weekends, or at most a few days at a time, now and then. But in getting out to these camps, to fish, hunt, and to live again under canvas in summer, reinvested Inuit beliefs in the importance of land and all it has provided to Caribou Inuit who have gone before. Peter's younger brother, Jamie, who was along as a deckhand, explained that "Spring Camp" an annual school outing, institutionalized this periodic and symbolic return to the land for learning and renewal, but that it was probably more fun just going out on the land with uncles, aunts or other family members to do what one pleased.

Without a doubt, the most memorable part of the journey with Peter was travelling out on the open lake with water horizons in three directions, on our westward swing back to the community. As a we're-lost-in-the-middle-of-nowhere feeling arose in my guts, I looked at Peter who stood nonchalantly at the wheel negotiating the boat as it crashed and surfed on growing swells. The only visible reference point on land was a thin green smear to the southwest. I asked him what he was looking at to know where we were. He proceeded to point out the subtlest details in the distance and tell me something about what he had done in those places. A tiny green mound straight ahead was Haunted Island. His grandmother had told him that her father was a shaman and that he had taught that if you camp on this island then you will lose something of great value—a dog, a paddle, a stove, or something like that. A series of almost imperceptible variations in the thin green line between water and sky to our left were the Kazan Hills where Peter had just been with a film crew the day before. This was a good place to hunt caribou around now, he told me. And so it was for Sugarloaf and Blueberry Hill, places he was keying on that were invisible to my eye. There were also the waves, he told me, which, like snowdrifts in winter, gave him a good idea about our line of travel across the lake. Peter's talk this day was an important glimpse at land through Inuit eyes. For this Inuk, the land was represented in his mind as an amalgam of names, experiences, stories, and stored images of subtle shapes and shades. Of course there was not a map to be found anywhere, except in Peter's head.

Similar to the situation on leaving Lutsel K'e, in many ways I was swamped with impressions, information and sensations generated during my time in Qamanittuaq. However, instead of trying to pull the experiences together visually, I opted instead to try capturing in blank verse the following synthetic statement:

Nuna

Nu Nun Nuna Nunavut
Sastrugi
Parallel ridges of snow
Mark here, and there
And the line that joins yesterday
with tomorrow.

Nu Nun Nuna Nunasila
Here is a good place for wolf
The caribou cross here in summer
Where is here?
Where is there?
There is here.
We went there when I was young.

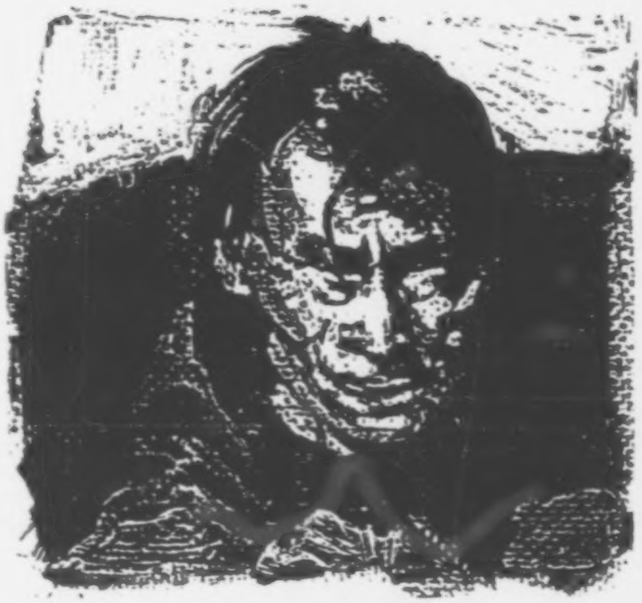
Nu Nun Nuna Nunaissaqanituq
Ajurnarmat
It can't be helped
We are equally thankful
for all that the land provides
People live. People talk. People die.
What frequency do you need
to link with a Tapir-i-sat?

Sa San Sanct Sanctuary
An invisible line
that tethers meat from hungry mouths
The stranger with striped pants flies in the air
Could he be God?

Nu Nun Nuna Nunatsiaq
People live. People hunt. People go to the Bay.
People talk
of times gone by
of times yet to come
in a beautiful land
Moving—always moving
Across invisible landscapes
Until the game runs out, and they begin again.

Uu kanata saalagijauqunak...

Barnabus Aarnasungaaq



One of the most visible elders to a Qamanittuaq visitor is 67-year-old carver Barnabus Aarnasungaaq, who can be found winter and summer kneeling outside his house behind the Northern Store warehouse chipping away at his latest soapstone creation. Aarnasungaaq told me that he was born around 1924 on a lake about 55 miles west southwest of Baker Lake. He remembers a lot of people living in the Beverly Lake area when he went there with his new wife, just before their first child was born. That would have been in the late 30s or early 40s, and the curious thing he remembered during our conversation was that as far as he knew no one in that area had heard about the Thelon Game Sanctuary. The year he spent in the Thelon River area, at Beverly Lake, he remembers hunting and trapping all through the region, up the Thelon River from Beverly Lake and around, and no one ever mentioning anything about the game Sanctuary. He informed me that he didn't hear about the Sanctuary until the late 50s, until about a year before he and his family moved into the community. He allowed that he thought this was kind of funny because he and his family were hunting in that region when they lived for two summers and one winter in the Beverly Lake area. But even when he heard about the Sanctuary, he told me that even then he didn't really know what it was or what it was about.

Our conversation was quite short, but having read a transcript of a conversation between Hattie Mannik and Aarnasungaaq, I was curious to hear about an encounter he had had with a large herd of strange wolf-like creatures in the Thelon watershed. The story was captivating, but a pearl offered to the research by Barnabus was a comment he made just before leaving having to do with hard times on the land and how there is great instructive power in being as thankful for these as one is for the good times. We spoke in my house in Qamanittuaq:

> It was the summer, about this time of year when my wife and I had been married about a year. Our first child had been born by then. That child was about three months old at that time. We were camping on the south end of Princess Mary Lake. There were just the two of us, because the other families were camping on the other lake, Pitz Lake. There were just the two of us, plus the child. The child was about three months old at the time. There was one experience that summer that I will always remember.
>
> In those days, people used to come in to trade for fur or anything they could trade in to the Hudson Bay Company here. We had some fur that we had caught earlier that summer, when we were at another camp. We had to walk to that other camp to pick up those furs, so we could walk into town and trade them for whatever we were in need of. Of course in those days, the only transportation was by walking. People didn't have boats or canoes at that time.
>
> We had spent the summer at Princess Mary Lake. There had been quite a bit of caribou that summer. It was about this time of year, when the days start to get dark in the evening. We had started walking from our camp toward the community, coming this way, because we were going to meet the other families at Pitz Lake. Because it's quite a distance from here to there, we had to camp. We had to start walking from our camp and we stayed overnight in between.
>
> Just before dark, we saw about half a dozen wolves. I shot one of them. There was something different about that wolf. The fur was okay, but the tail was different in that it didn't have any fur on it. It was almost nothing but skin and bone. Part of the fur was also very thin compared to a regular wolf.
>
> I skinned that one and took it back to the tent. We had camped for the night and were going to continue walking the next day.
>
> As soon as it got dark, my wife and I were in the tent. We were in a small tent we were carrying because we were walking at the time. As soon as it got dark, you could hear footsteps just outside the tent. They were walking. You could tell whatever those animals were, they were walking west, walking that way. But they would walk right by the tent.

When one lives out on the land all the time, one can tell the difference between a herd of caribou and a herd of any other animals. These ones were not caribou. You could tell that just by listening. But they came very, very close to the tent. Sometimes they would walk around the tent, real close to the tent. They never made any noise, but you could hear them walking. You could tell they were there in very, very large numbers. It got to the point where, naturally, my wife and I were very afraid by that because this was after dark in the evening. It could have been early evening, but it gets dark early in the evening about this time of the year.

There was really nothing we could do except sit in the tent. And yet we were very afraid because sometimes it sounds like one of these animals would come into the tent, or just rip the tent apart, because there were so many of them. You could tell there were thousands and thousands of them. We were too afraid to move. We just sat in the tent and just kind of waited to see what would happen. This went on pretty well all through the night. We finally fell asleep for a while in the early hours of the morning, and woke up again when there was just enough light to see about five hundred yards from the tent.

In those days, because people didn't have a lot of utensils, like cooking utensils and that if you wanted to make something, I went out from the tent in early morning to make tea. I had to use firewood outside to make tea. Just as I went out from the tent that morning, there were seven wolves that were just leaving. And they were the only ones I saw that morning, prior to the ones I'd seen the night before in the early evening the night before.

One of the most scary things about that was those animals, whatever they were, they were not caribou, they were perhaps wolf-like animals but they were in very large numbers. And yet the funny thing about that is that they never make a sound. All you could hear was the sound of them walking. They walked pretty well all through the night.

When we got to the other camp, where we were to pick up the skins we were going to take in to trade, we had left some dry meat and some of our belongings at that camp a couple of months earlier, in the early summer. My dad also died that summer and he was buried there. In those days people didn't have coffins, so what you did was wrap them up in a caribou skin. Well all of our belongings and all of our dry meat had been scattered all over the place, plus my dad's grave had been torn into pieces. The carcass had been rolled away about five hundred yards from the original grave. We could never figure out how these things happened or who did that, except to say that it was something that was done by some kind of animal. We weren't sure what they were. To this day, we don't know what they were or why they tore the camp apart, but that was one really, really scary experience my wife and I had that one summer. I often think about it. Something like this in life you never forget. It's something that really scares you, and yet to be able to have lived through it and be able to survive something like this is that one never forgets. It's something that has very rarely happened to other people, and its a scary experience.

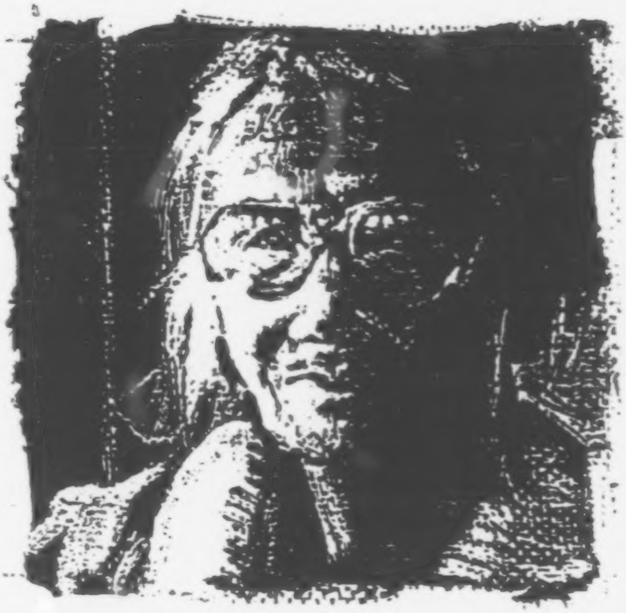
The only conclusions I can come up with, with all of our personal belongings and all the dry meat gone or damaged, every single one of them, plus my father's body that had been buried in a grave had been moved from the grave about five hundred yards, the only conclusion I can come to is those animals, whatever they were, because there was also a dead wolf there, at the old campsite, just a regular wolf, an ordinary wolf, and that had been killed by something. The only conclusion was that it must have been those animals, whatever they were, because they had come in from that direction, when they passed by our tent that evening.

Possibly some other people have had this experience. If any, very few. And the only conclusions I can come to was the fact that whatever those animals were, there was one kind of animal that people used to talk about that very, very rarely has ever been seen, or experienced by a lot of people and they were called, Katsut, a big, large herd of wolf-like animals. But those were experienced very rarely by anyone. I had heard those stories. I had been told about that kind of experience by my parents. I thought maybe that was the only conclusion I could come to. Perhaps that's what those animals were, whatever they were, because it was dark during the night and you couldn't see anything, but yet you could hear them come very close to the tent. I came to the conclusion that maybe that's what that herd of animals was.

One of the things about being on the land, and having to survive on the land, is perhaps some people like myself have gone through this kind of scary experience on the land. For the first little while after that you often have the feeling that it's not going to occur again. But after a while it's something that came and went, and anytime when one is learning to live and survive on the land, one must learn to expect that kind of experience, whether it ever occurs in your lifetime or not, one is always prepared for that. So it's something that one learns to live with, and the only really scary part about it is when we had the experience, it's pretty scary, but it's something eventually you forget about it.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things about learning from the land, or what the land can teach you, what you can take from the land, what you can accomplish from the land, just to make a short example—today we have small kids in the community, kids about five years old, they're in school now learning to speak English, learning to write in English. There are materials there in the school to teach you how to read and how to write. That's just an quick illustration of what a child gets from the classroom, how a child benefits from the classroom, the materials that are used in the classroom. Learning from the land is similar, except it's more difficult. Because when one is learning to live and to survive on the land, one must be taught how to live and to survive on the land. And from the land come both good and hard times. One of the most difficult things that the land provides for you are the hard times. In the winter when it's very cold, your parents even then your parents will teach you how to survive. When the bad years come, when there is very little food to provide for your family, again they will also teach you how you can survive for that particular winter. So the land will give you both the good and the hard times. And yet, because one has been able to survive in those, both the good times and bad conditions, one learns to be thankful for what the land has given to you, what the land has been able to teach you.

Vera Akumalik



My conversation with diminutive 79-year-old Baker Lake grandmother Vera Akumalik occurred in her home in the community. Sitting at the kitchen table, pointing out places she knew and places she'd travelled with wizened fingers on a map spread before her on the table, Vera spoke of life as a widow raising children on the land, walking from place to place. She was born, she told me, on the Hudson Bay coast, north of Chesterfield Inlet, and travelled back and forth between Baker Lake and the coast. As a result, despite having travelled up the Thelon River from time to time, the land she knew best and liked the most, was the land to the north and east of Baker Lake.

Vera had not heard of the Thelon Game Sanctuary while she was out living on the land. However, soon after moving into town in the late 30s or early 40s, she learned of the existence of the Sanctuary.[75] "It was not something that people expected, or even thought about," she said. "One was busy enough surviving."

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[75] In a printed interview with Vera (Baker Lake Community Group 1975) one gets more details about the circumstances under which she moved to town. Apparently, after her husband died on the land in the fall of 1939, she was told by her brother Thomas Tapatai to move to the settlement. She arrived in Baker Lake with drinking cups, a cooking pot, a few sleeping things, and two babies.

Vera spoke with great affection about the land. I was struck by the clarity with which she explained how mind pictures and other types of knowledge allowed her to get around without losing her way. Looking at her small size I had difficulty imagining her walking everywhere she went when she lived on the land with her family. However, the most significant element in our exchange was, surprisingly, not something she said but rather something that she did. As our conversation was coming to a close, she pointed out the window at a small pile of willow twigs and a fire pit. Now that she was too old to get out on the land herself, her tangible connection to the land, apparently a symbol of her relationship with the land, was with willow and what she could do with it. As our conversation ended, she remarked, "One can learn a great deal from the land. One always keeps something from the land. I've got some willows there outside the house that I use quite often. I use them for fire, for firewood, for cooking. Every time I go out, I pick up a few willows. Often times I use that when we have cooking contests in town. I always try to have some on hand."

Perhaps one of the most important reasons why the land is so important to the Inuit is that—particularly because their ancestors had a lot more difficult time than the younger generation, people of my age now—we have had a lot of difficult times. And yet we were able to survive and bring up families. The reason why most of us are here today is because our grandparents, our parents were able to provide for us. And the only reason why they were able to do that is because they were provided by the land—animals—in their need. So in that sense the land is important to all people who have lived—particularly for those who live on the land.

While growing up as a small child, I learned from my dad, but my dad passed away at a very early age, when I was very young. I don't remember him that much. I do remember my mom and my uncle. And it depends on different families and different people. Some families would teach their daughters as much as they would teach their son about the land. Others would teach their daughters to prepare skins and that sort of thing. I think different families had different ways of bringing up their children. It depended who they grew up with and how.

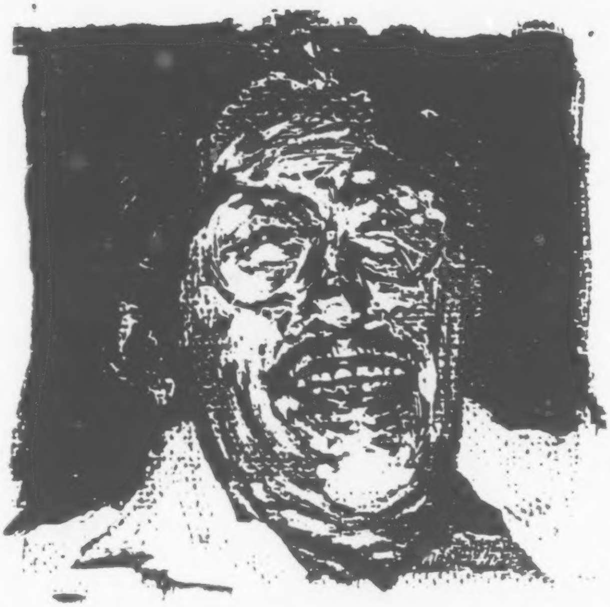
Lost, how could you get lost? Especially when you are brought up not to be lost. When you're brought up on the land, one is always learning about the land when you travel. So you know which direction you came from, where you went, and which way you travel. When one can learn to do that, one can walk for miles and miles and never get lost. You always have those pictures of the land in your mind as you travel. It's almost like opening new doors as you walk along. The pictures come into your mind. You always look around when you walk. You always take note of special landmarks, or something. With those in mind, one never gets lost, even if you travel a long distance. Some of the landmarks that one learns to recognize, and learn to picture in your mind as you're walking in the summer, when you're travelling long distances are lakes and different sized hills. That's what you learn to picture in your mind when you're walking or when you're travelling. Hills and lakes are easier to remember and easier to recognize than some of the lower land areas.

When you picture the land, you picture every detail. Automatically, everything comes to mind, so you could see it the way it used to be and probably the way it still is. It doesn't matter, you could remember a small rock on top of another rock, you could remember where it is. You could picture exactly where it is. And it is probably still there the way it was.

Perhaps one of the most important things about learning the land, or what the land teaches you, is something that comes from yourself because in those days, in order for us to survive, when we were younger, in those days if you were going to survive, one must have the requirements to survive such as a good rifle. Some families may have had one rifle. Some families may have had one dog team. It was different with different families, and yet all of these people had to learn from the land in order for them to survive. And one of the reasons why the land, I guess, almost becomes part of you, is that what the land has been able to give to you that always stays with you. That's why I get homesick, that's why one always has to go back to the land. And yet, along the way in life, one still learns to take from the land and also to give back to the land.

One of the most important things about being able to appreciate and being able to be thankful to the land for being able to provide for us is this. Although the land may not have been able to provide for you at all times. Sometimes, it is very difficult. Sometimes you travel for miles and miles and not get anything. You may fish in some of the lakes and never catch a fish for a long while, so therefore you have to find the animals that you need or these fish that you want. And yet, having gone through that difficult time—life isn't always easy. But there are good times too. Some years you have good times, some years you have plenty, some years you have very little. Some people think that people who have been through the hard times, like we did, don't really have anything to be thankful for the land. There is more to be thankful for in those days than there is today because if we had not been able to survive in those hard times, we wouldn't be here now. We have a lot more to be thankful for than some people think.

Nathaniel Angu'juaq



When interpreter John Pudnak and I arrived at Nathaniel's house in Baker Lake, the 65-year-old elder seemed to be expecting us. The house was very neat and tidy and he was dressed in a corduroy jacket and trousers. In the middle of our conversation, his youngest son, a man in his twenties, poked his head in the door, asked a question of Nathaniel, ducked out and reappeared with a load of fresh caribou meat wrapped in a caribou hide. Nathaniel thanked him with a smile without missing a beat in our conversation.

He explained that he was born on a point very near to the current settlement of Gjoa Haven, well to the north of the Thelon River. For most of his life, he had lived in the Back River area at Garry Lake, near the northern border of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Although he himself never travelled up the Thelon River for any distance, he had heard that there were things called trees near there. He thought perhaps his ancestors travelled out that way. While living in the Garry Lake area, he was aware that the Sanctuary existed, but he was never really sure exactly where the boundary was. All he knew was that people weren't too happy about the boundary being there. His connection with Baker Lake was with the trading post there. Most of the time his family would go northwest to Parry River for supplies, but occasionally, in spring, when the days were long, he would travel to Baker Lake by dog team. He spoke about many aspects of land and land knowledge.

Of particular interest to me were his detailed explanations—again using the idea of mind pictures—of how he learned to recognize places and to get from one point to another without getting disoriented. Nathaniel helped confirm the complex of interwoven knowledge of place names, stories, and personal experience that make up Inuit understanding about land, and he gave some important insights into the ways in which this learning occurred, especially with respect to the role that elders played in the process:

> One of the best landmarks in the winter is the snowdrift. As long as you know which direction the snowdrifts are going, you will always get to your destination, as long as there are snowdrifts to tell you which way you are going. Of course everyone travels by snowmachine now. When you're travelling so fast, one does not have the same opportunity to learn the things about what the land is like. With a dog team, a good dog team will still travel the same distance, maybe a little bit slower, but they will be able to travel the same distance, maybe even further. But yet, it's a whole way of learning something in a new world kind of thing, almost like a new world kind of thing, and the way that we learned from our grandparents and our parents. Because of the travelling by dog team. It may be slower, but it will still get you to the same destination. Travelling by snowmobile might be faster, but the young people of today don't get to learn what the land is like because they're travelling so fast. Sometimes that's a problem, losing some of the opportunities to learn that were available to people who learned to travel by dogsled. People travelling on snowmobiles today miss a great deal.
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> The things that one has to learn, to memorize, or to picture are the shape of the land, maybe a point on the lake, or maybe the lake itself, inukshuk. Those are the things when travelling by dogsled that you could see, without travelling so fast as you do with a snowmobile. A lot of time when people are travelling by snowmobile, they don't even think about these things, they're just travelling. They miss all of these details that are important details. One of the things about inukshuks is that although they are located on many areas of the land, they are made in different sizes and different shapes, you always get to know which ones they are and exactly where they are. Just to use one example, there is one really good inukshuk just down the lake here, about 40 miles down the lake, right on a point. If you travel from any direction and reach that point, automatically you know exactly where you are or where you came from. Although in those days when one was travelling by dog team, there were always those areas where you have never travelled before. Because there are inukshuks all through the areas of the land there, sometimes one had to learn that

when you get to a new area or new spot you won't always know automatically or right away because it's a learning process. And yet, each inukshuk that you've been to, or that you're aware of, they may be different sizes, one would know automatically where they are. It doesn't matter which direction you're travelling or what direction you came from. Once you get to them, you always know them. One would always recognize the inukshuk because of the way it is, and because of the area where it is. If you've been there before, and you get back there, even in a snowstorm, it's something that comes to you right away. You recognize it and you know where you are.

When I was a young man, I had to learn a great deal of my travel by just picturing names and areas. I didn't really have any other choice. I had to learn to do that by memory. In order to survive, one had to learn that by memory. The things that you learn by memory, you learn as you go along, as you get older, and as you start travelling longer distances. My oldest son, when he was old enough to shoot a rifle, I used to take him out on the land to learn how to travel on the land and how to survive on the land. So he's good at that now. He knows how to survive and he can go any distance from the community if he wants to travel. He can do that by remembering those names and by remembering the locations of those land and lakes and everything. He can do that now, because I taught him. The younger boys are not able to do that, partly because I have not taught them as much and because now, when people live in the community, one does not have the same opportunity. You could tell a young person today name places and how to get there from here but today is different. Even if you tell them or show them how to get from here to there, the only way they can do it today is by using a map. They couldn't do it by memory because it is so difficult for them now. They're not used to living and growing up on the land. They don't have any idea what the land is like and what might happen. They don't have that experience. Therefore, having to learn today by memory is something that is rarely done any more because you would probably only create some problems now. When you're teaching a child the land, and the name places on the land, there's a lot of things that go with that. It's not just a matter of being able to survive and to travel on the land, but it includes all of the daily things that one learns.

We were aware that the Thelon Game Sanctuary existed, but right away we were not aware of the boundary of it. There used to be an indication that once people learned about it, they were very unhappy about it, just because the boundary was too close to their camp maybe, or too close for hunting purposes. People were not happy about the boundary. In those years people couldn't do anything about it really. It was always like that in the past. People were never sure, or could never do anything about the things they were not happy about, certainly that was the case compared to what we can do today. If you're unhappy about something today, people will speak up about it. In those days, it was different, because people couldn't do anything about it. The Sanctuary had already been established.

A young child, once they were old enough to travel with their father, they were taught how to use and how to travel the land. I guess that's one of the main reasons the land is important. It's what the land has given you. That's what comes from the land itself, that young men and young boys learn at an early age how to travel and how to survive. It was more the young boys that gain some experience from the land itself by being able to travel with their dad. One thing I'll never forget is my first scary experience. A lot of people hunt seal on the sea ice. In those days, people would spend hours and hours hunting on sea ice. One time I saw something on the ice and I wasn't sure what it was. At first I thought it was somebody's dog sled with a skin on top of it, white fur, white skin. I went over to one of the guys who was there—he's an old man now, his name is David Mannik, he was young at the time, he didn't even have kids at that time—he was sitting at a seal hole. People used to sit there all day long. David was doing that. I went over and asked him what that thing was, because I wasn't sure what it was. I thought it might be a dog sled or something, but it wasn't moving. You could tell it was something. David looked at it, and he wasn't sure what it was either. There was another guy at another seal hole, and I went over and asked him about it too. He took one look at it and told me that it was a polar bear. I really got scared. That was one time I was really scared. I'll never forget that. I had two dogs with me. That was one experience I will always remember. That particular polar bear just walked away from where it had been lying. Apparently, it had been eating a seal at the time. The other guys went over. One in particular—people always used to have dogs with them if they were out on the sea ice, walking on the sea ice, because the dogs always come in handy. What you do is you take the dogs on the leash and you tie them around you. Then you take one of the dogs and you let it go after the bear, and keep the other ones. Because of some difficulty with that, the guy who at the beginning was closest to the polar bear, ended being the last one, behind the other two. But the bear just walked away. But the other hunters went out and got it. That was the only experience I had with a polar bear. After that we moved inland.

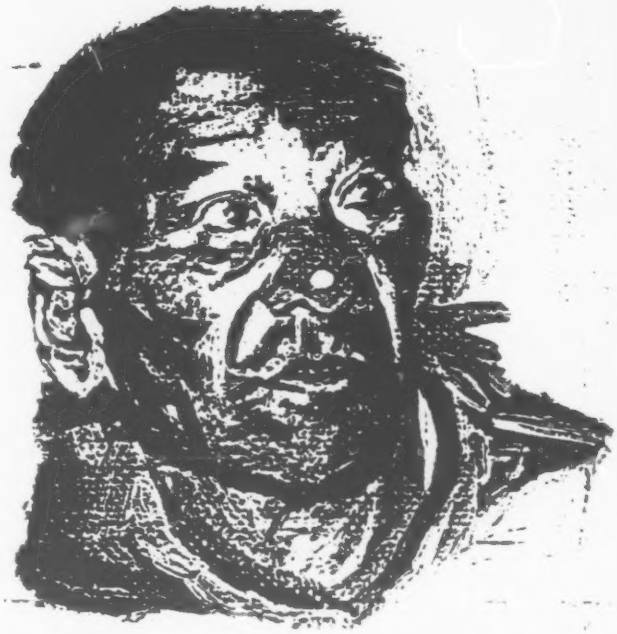
Polar bears have good uses. The fur is very good, particularly when you have to water your runners on your sled. You use polar bear skin for that purpose. It doesn't stick on the runners, for one thing. Polar bear who spend a lot of time on the sea ice eating seal meat have very good meat. That's another purpose. They're good eating.

One of the things about learning on the land, not only will they teach you when you get to a particular area or a particular land that this is such and such, one of the things that your parents always teach you is the names of places that you have not seen before. Another thing you learned to do was to travel to places you had not been before, just by picturing and memorizing the names that your parents or your dad has told you. One had to learn to do that by remembering names that had been taught to you, even if you hadn't been there. One particular time—I was still a young man. My wife and I had one child and another one was on the way. We travelled south of Garry Lake just by remembering names. We travelled by dog team in early spring. We travelled by remembering names that my father had taught me, and yet I had never been to that land before. So one had to learn to travel and to learn the land even if you had not been there before. They didn't always have to take you to a place to learn it. Sometimes travelling was fun and sometimes it was difficult.

There were four caribou on an island in a lake on that trip. We had six dogs at the time. There were two families travelling. The problem with dogs is that they are used to going after game. Sometimes we would put the two teams on one sled, so that it would make it easier that way. The dogs already knew something was going on. They were very difficult to control. We had trouble. Six dogs are pretty powerful because they are used to carrying a heavy load. Sometimes you had difficulty with six dogs when they had already seen something. Dogs would automatically know that something was going on, even before they see, or even before you tell them. That's one of the things that's very difficult to control, very hard to control.

When they teach you a name place that you haven't been to, it is something that you have to learn by picturing it and then to try to remember it. They will give you a description of the land or the feature itself. For example, they might say there's small hill with an inukshuk on one side, or a point on the lake. They will give you the description. Even when you travel the land a lot, the land at times seems to be all the same when you're trying to learn. There has to be some description of what the lake is like or where it is. When they teach you these name places that you have never been to, to use an example of one occasion that I mentioned earlier when I had to travel just by remembering place names of a particular lake, if it happens to be a lake, they will tell you the name of the lake and also give a descriptions of the land itself around the lake, maybe a point on the north side of the lake or a small hill on the south side of the lake, or maybe a long ridge on the north side of the lake. They always make sure that they describe to you the surroundings of that particular name when they teach you places that you may visit in the future. One of the things about teaching you the names in this way is that when your parents are gone and you have to learn to survive and travel on your own, then you have to be able to remember those names, first of all the name places and the descriptions of the names. It was a matter of being able to remember the names to start off and then being able to recognize the description that was given to that particular name, or that particular land or lake. Without those descriptions, one would have difficulty, partly because you might never have been there before, but sometimes it's even difficult to recognize even if you have been there. Sometimes you wonder if this is the place that my father told me about. Sometimes you wonder that. And yet sometimes you start to look around your surroundings once you get there and by picturing and by remembering the descriptions you can usually figure out where you are.

Luke Arngna'naaq



Of all the people I talked to in Baker Lake, the most animated and interesting consultant was 57-year-old Luke Arngna'naaq. He was born in a tent right on the location of the current Northern Store, on the beach in Baker Lake. His strongest memories of growing up though were when his family lived northwest of Beverly Lake, where his grandparents had lived for a long time. He remembers hunting all through the eastern extent of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, and told me he remembers when the Sanctuary was established and how this forced his family to move to near the cabin located at the outflow of the Thelon River into Beverly Lake. He had clear recollections of his grandfather's unhappiness with the establishment of the Sanctuary, because this was a place that was known for its abundant game—an island of game in an area that was known for bad years for hunting and trapping.

Luke came twice with interpreter John Pudnak to my house in Baker Lake, where we talked for hours about many things. He described living with his grandparents either *in* the Sanctuary, or very close to it, during his formative years in the mid to late 1930s. Life for Luke involved a slow move toward town from about 1940 on—after Thelon River and Beverly Lake, ten years around Schultz Lake, ten years near a lake south of there and finally into town. Unlike consultants such as Vera, who clearly derived her land knowledge from lands away from the Sanctuary. Luke's knowledge was grounded in the Sanctuary and, later, in the Thelon River basin. For that reason, most of what he said is relevant to this investigation.

Luke's stories about fish markers, his own experience on the land, how he liked the trees in the Thelon region and about how he still gets homesick for the land were engaging and added substantially to my knowledge of the area as seen by Inuit, but of most significance to this study was Luke's notion of "telling experience."

Stories about what happened on the land had a very important instructional function. In Luke's mind, when his parents or grandparents told him something about they had done on the land, they weren't telling stories, in a narrative sense, for fun or for recreation, they were "telling experience," which I took to mean teaching the younger people about life on the land. This notion of telling experience was in fact, I came to see, what most people were doing with me. And after Luke had introduced this concept, his stories about his grandfather and about how fish markers work, for example, became *told experience.* It was a subtle but interesting distinction. Luke also provided for this work a very important explanation of how land is just as important to people living in communities today, as it was when people had to live and survive on the land. He established, by example, the fact that land and land experience exist in many forms, including near-mythological forms, in the minds of Qamanittuaq Inuit. Here follow some of Luke's tales of his experience:

> One of the things that I remember quite well about having to live in and travel this area here is that my grandfather—just hearing my grandfather talking—my grandfather used to say that there was a lot of game within this area here to the west, beyond the game Sanctuary. Not only because the Sanctuary was established, but

the fact that even a long time before that the game had always been plentiful to the west—more plentiful, so, on this side, than it is to the west. At certain times of year this area here is—there'd be good caribou hunting right about now. Starting right about now for the next couple of months. During the middle of the summer—June and July—there's nothing here. You'll never even see one caribou. Fall? Starting in early fall, right to late fall, there's lots of game there. Lots of wolves, certainly, all winter there. There's plenty of wolf there—there's always been a lot of wolf, even in those days. Now, there's probably a lot more than there were in those days.

One thing about the plentiful of the game within the game Sanctuary—not that it's always plentiful from year to year. I don't think it's always plentiful year after year. It's just the same thing that—caribou migration is just something that they travel from one direction to another—different directions at different time of the year. But for some reason a lot of the animals seem to stop there, and perhaps just like any other areas, any other spot, because although the game Sanctuary is marked on the map there, as you see, with a boundary, certainly animals and a game don't have a boundary that they work. You know—a boundary doesn't mean anything to a caribou or a wolf or fox. But because, when people started going in there to hunt them, then they find animals are smart enough that they'll know, if they're locating in one area, that nobody will come and bother them for long, and they tend to come back to that same spot year after year after year. Eventually, I guess, a lot of these animals start to go into the game Sanctuary once—but animals are smart enough that if you don't bother them they'll come back to the same spot year after year. Eventually, different animals—muskox, wolf, foxes—eventually start to gather more in there, year after year. Not that it's any more plentiful, especially some years—not that it's any more plentiful than other areas. One of the more plentiful things that is in this area here—this area, location, here, is the wolf. There's just *lots* of wolf there are, there. They get to the point where they become very dangerous because there's so many of them, especially in the winter. Every time, after the sunset, they all come around, and during the day you never see them anywhere. They come in by a large group sometimes—very large numbers they come in. There's a lot of wolf there. There's always been that. And I take it today it's still pretty much the same. I understand there's still lots of wolf around that area. That seems to be one of the most plentiful game in there, within the—inside the Sanctuary itself from the outset is the wolf—there's good wolf hunting out there. But I don't really—it's hard to—it's difficult to tell, really, because once I became a hunter and became a man, we have milked the wolf from this area already by then, so I'm not really all that much aware of what might be in there, what was in there or what could be there.

My grandfather used to tell of other families who lived on the Thelon. My uncle and aunt used to travel up here and live up through this area here. But I don't recall my grandfather mentioning anything about his family being up here or family living in this area. Certainly, my aunt and uncle used to be up in that area; they used to talk about all these trees that had grown up here and how nice they looked. Of course, the only thing that used to draw a lot of people to this area here was the muskox, because muskox hunting was good in those days up in this area only. You couldn't find them anywhere else. In those days there were more in this area than anywhere else, and that was one of the reasons why people used to go up, that far, to—particularly just to hunt muskox. There's a lot of old camps along this area here where those people, possibly a lot of families, used to live many years before that.

Prior to the time when muskox hunting—unfortunately, we were not allowed to hunt any more muskox by the time I came around, but prior to that time people used to hunt muskox mainly for the purpose of getting the antlers because the antlers were very useful. People didn't have a lot of tools in those days; they didn't have a lot of utensils. So the muskox were for a number of things—particularly the muskox horns were used for a number of purposes: utensils, fish spears, a lot of other things. That was one of the main reasons why we used to go in there to hunt muskox, and also particularly because of the meat. Some years if the caribou—if a number of families are not going to have enough caribou meat for the winter, they go out and get muskox. They never really went out there any time they felt they wanted to go muskox hunting. They only went in to get muskox when there was a real need for it, even though there were a lot of muskox there. Partly because they're so heavy and they're so big, and people didn't have proper transportation in those years. They would take them as they required them, whenever they really needed food.

Land is so important to the Inuit because it has a lot to give. Not only that, but maybe one of the best reasons is that sometimes game is very difficult to come by. Some years you have bad years—no caribou come by. No fish, some years. When you have a bad year during the summer, the land is the only thing that will provide you with something you could eat. There's always food on the land so that one can eat blue and black berries and all that. And because, when nothing else is available—some years there's really nothing else available—no caribou, no fish, sometimes even no birds, rabbit, fox—when that year comes, or when that year occurred, the land will provide food for its, for the people, for the Inuit. Not only does it provide food, it also provides equipment—provides you with the items that you require as helpful equipment, like pots made out of soapstones, skins, papers, and tools you can make out of soapstones. There are a number of utensils and tools that are used that are provided by the land itself which come from a different-textured soapstone. So the land, really, it doesn't only provide you with animals and food and clothing, but the land, in particular itself, also provides you with food when necessary, when nothing else is available; provides you with tools and utensils and a lot of the necessities that people have need of when you're—especially many years ago when there were no store-bought utensils that were available and all the tools were not available. And it's basically from the land itself that people learn to survive and live. That may be one of the reasons why the land is so important to many of the older people, many of the older people who have experienced the land to survive on the land.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things is to—having lived in a community for a number of years now, and yet have always been able to take some time off to go back out to the land, to some of the old camps because, once in a while, whenever there's an opportunity to do so, probably most of the other people of my age feel the same way as I do. The land was always important at the time when you had to live and to survive and learn to become a hunter or whatever, as a young person, as a young man. It's always important, and it is something I guess you really grow up with that you always have in you—something you always remember, something you don't forget. Even living in a community it's still as important. It was very important at the time when you were growing up as a young man; today, it's still as important as if it was just a few days ago, a few weeks ago. Because the land is something, I guess, quite different from anything else. It's something that's basically almost within your system, I guess. Something that has given to you so much, or something you've been able to get so much from, and oftentimes when you sit back and try to remember some of the different areas and different lands that you've lived in over the past years, over the number of years that people lived out in the camp, lived out on the land, oftentimes you get homesick because you'd like to go back to this particular area or this particular river or lake. And in that way, even living in a community, the land is just as important as it was when you had to live and survive on it.

Perhaps one of the reasons why a lot of people sometimes get homesick for the old campgrounds or the old camping areas may be just, to use an example like, as a child, we used to travel down there and see trees. They're not very big trees; there are some trees down around here, although they're not very big trees. When you are a child they look like big trees. (*South side of Beverly Lake, there.*) Yeah, on this side. Yes, and when you are a child, as a kid they look like big trees. And I used to like being there a lot, eh? Because when I was a child that was one of the first things that used to come to mind—you know—"I wish we would go back there. I wish we would go back there!" Because I loved it there as a child because of the trees in there, eh? And of course my grandfather didn't like it there because I said you can't see to any distance—because, as a hunter, you always have to be—you're better off if you can see to a longer distance from where you may happen to be. So they didn't like it; that's why we always used to move back up to our camp over on this side or somewhere if we happened to be on this side. As a child, that was one of the things that used to come to mind, like, you know, "I wish I could go back there because it's fun," because, you know, there were trees there. People have different reasons for getting homesick for the old campground. My parents and my grandparents used to get homesick for their old campgrounds because, in some cases, there used to be a lot of caribou at a certain time of the year, or in some cases there were a lot of fish in the lakes at a certain time of the year—different seasons of the year, people have different reasons for wanting to get back home to their old campgrounds. Mainly, a majority of the reasons for any people, any Inuit, would be mainly due to the caribou seasons. In the early spring, herds of caribou walk south in one direction, and then June, July and August are perhaps the three months of the year when people used to do a lot of travelling instead of remaining at one camp for any length of time, partly because especially around the beginning or the middle of September, before the fur gets too thick, you have to get in a supply so you can have winter clothing or any skin that you're going to require for the coming winter. So therefore people would automatically always know which direction that herd's going to travel, where they're going to be at a certain time, during the month of August. And therefore, because in later years, when you look back at all this, sometime, you have a reason for wanting to be back at a certain place at a certain time in a certain campground, because you knew that this time of the year there was lots of caribou who there now, just as there used to be many years ago. Or, the fishing is good now, in June or July—not so much in July, probably in August—the fishing is really good now, at a certain, at a particular spot. I think that comes to mind like that and makes one want to be back home—get homesick for the land. People may have different reasons for wanting to be home on the land, but no doubt a great majority of the people are homesick because of the game that used to provide to them in their camp or in their travel on the land, not only at any particular camp, but certainly on their travels, because people never did stay in one spot for any length of time; they always used to move from one area to the other partly because, in order to survive, sometimes we have to go where the caribou herd's going to be at a certain time of the year, or even at a certain time in the summer or winter. It depends on fishing—a great deal of the time, most of the spring and late fall and early fall, you depend on getting—early fall is the best time to start preparing yourself for winter—falling skins—if you're going to have enough clothing to provide for your family for the winter, then you get the skin at a certain time of the year, which is right about now. And you get that inland, away from lakes—or a large lake inland, somewhere where they happen to be. And then once you have enough supplies of skin that you're going to require for the winter, then you move on to another area whereby in the late fall you have to start catching, like, for the winter; again, if you're going to provide your family and your dogs or whoever, or the camp, with meat for the winter, then you start catching them in the late fall so that you have enough meat for the winter. So preparing for the summer, preparing for the next winter, preparing for the next spring, preparing for the fall, is an ongoing thing all the time where you always have time to—you always need to have something to prepare, whether it be fish to dry or meat to dry, or caribou meat or skin, because one, having lived through all this kind of life and having experienced this thing, it makes one often get homesick because you know that today, or this year, or this part of the month, there's a lot of caribou in the areas where you grew up as a child, and it makes you want to be back home or you get homesick for it. That reason, and people may have different reasons for getting homesick for the land.

Well, it's one of the most easiest things, memorizing places and names, and what the land looks like, what the lakes and rivers look like. That is something that has at least—has always been one of the easiest things to learn. When you're a child growing up, until you get to a certain age, that's one thing that parents and grandparents never did, was to teach you or try to tell you about different names and different areas, or different land and different lakes and rivers, until you're ready to go out with your parents, your father, or your grandfather, until you're ready to go out with them, and they'll tell you or show you as you travel—you may travel to a certain distance in one day, and I will tell you which way you're going, where you came from, what areas are what. If a small lake happens to have a name, they'll tell you the name of the lake, or the name of a river or something. And as long as you can remember the names, that's the most important thing—if you can remember these names that are being taught to you by your parents, once you learn, once they figure you're old enough to start remembering names, is the time they start to teach you about the land. They'll teach you about how to travel; how to get from one place to another. Once they feel you're old enough to know that's the time they really start to teach you, and as a child, sometimes, it's quite difficult at the beginning because you're not used to learning anything prior to the time they start teaching you, because they don't tell you anything, they don't teach you nothing until they feel you're ready for it. And once they feel you're ready for it, then the teaching process is non-stop from then on. Because, now you're going to have to start to remember names; you have to remember, be able to recognize areas, and as long as you can remember names, whatever those names may happen to be—sometimes names are similar from one area to another—and yet if you can distinguish and remember those names, you can learn to recognize the place or the area. Sometimes, if you are a slow learner and you have difficulty in remembering names, you're going to have learned a lot slower than others. But as soon as your grandparents or your parent or your dad, whoever, may be teaching you how to live and survive on the land, and feel you're old enough to start to remember names and to recognize places, then from there on the learning process of the land itself is something else. It's non-stop: you're taught about the land, you're taught how to travel, you're told something about the land every day from there on. Remembering names and places is one of the easiest things, at least for Inuit, because you didn't have all these materials where you could write it down every time you heard the name of a place. You couldn't write it down, so memorizing is one of the best—it's the easiest part of it. But the process of learning at the beginning is very difficult because you're used to doing nothing when you're a small child, until your parents feel you're ready to go out and start to learn. Prior to that you did nothing but just play out as a child; they never teach you anything until they're sure you're ready to start to learn something. So the learning process was something that, to a lot of children, I guess, it didn't come as they started to learn to talk, but it started to come once your parents felt you were old enough to start learning. That's the kind of learning—at least, I find it's quite simple—it's not hard work. You forgot to remember names, sometimes, but it's no more difficult than learning to survive.

One of the things about grandparents' and parents' teaching methods is one that is probably not done in any other society or culture. Not so much that they would tell stories about a lot of things when they're teaching you to be a hunter or teaching you to do certain things, but rather they always tell you a great deal more of their own experience of the things they have done in their lives. Just to use an example, because I learned a lot of things that I am now able to do today—a great deal of that I learned from my grandfather, because my dad died when I was a very young man. And I had to learn a lot of things from my grandfather. And he used to teach me, and if he was going to teach me about certain things, he would always tell me about himself. Not so much about stories that he'd heard or not so much about stories I knew, but mainly about the experiences he had to go through in order to be where I was. And how he happened to be able to survive in the previous years. And the teaching method is that they will teach you—most parents and grandparents—they will teach you the things that they have learned themselves, the experiences that they have gone through in their lives. Telling stories about—I guess stories, mainly, were told among the old people, among themselves, but there was no telling when the young people were around. Stories were rarely told to young people in those days; storytelling was an entertainment, it was a kind of an entertainment that was done among the adults and the older people. Really nothing that was taught to the children, or it wasn't a part of teaching a young person to be a hunter, or whatever that person was going to be. Their methods of teaching you mainly came from the experience that they had had in their lives. Just to use an example, because they were teaching me to become a man or become a hunter, one must always remember that the teacher has had many years of experiences of surviving on the land and being able to survive on their own. And yet, when you're a young person, a lot of the things they tell you that you will be able to do in the future are something that at the time you don't believe.

My grandfather used to tell me that I could run from here across to the other side of the lake non-stop, because he used to do that. He used to tell me that, "You know—now is the time that you've got to learn to do this, and you've got to try." I had to try that because it was part of his teaching. I got to the point where I could run all the way from here across to the other side of the lake, and I didn't have any difficulty with that. But at the beginning it was something that was always difficult to do. You only went a short distance and then you had to give up because your breath gave out or your legs got tired. But, if you continued, possibly about half an hour later you could start running and you could keep going until you got to the other side of the lake. And come running back again. And you could keep doing that three or four times, non-stop, and it's easy. So, the teachers you had that were teaching you that you could do these things, or that you would be doing these things in the future, were people who had had the experience, had gone through all this, so they could teach you how to become a hunter and to do certain things. But I guess the real thing is that the teaching methods were that they would teach you the things that they had learned themselves and about themselves, more than anything else. One of the most difficult things is to run from here and go across to the other side. As you can see (pointing to the map), it is quite a distance from here. When I first tried—please turn the map for me— Yeah, right here. See that hill there? That one is 200 ft. You could run from about here to there, and then stop there. It's very simple. It's very easy. The only difficult thing is the first run. But a person—one—your father or your grandfather or your grandparents teach you something. They teach you that, until you're able to do what they want you to do until they're sure you can do it. The first run—to train you in order to run, they didn't give you that distance right at the beginning. The first run was from this camp to here. Even that was very difficult. I just barely made it from there to there because that was pretty hard. (*That's five miles!*) The caribou was coming from this side; I got to about somewhere close to these two lakes and he told me that I had to be up here before they get here. So I made a run; it was difficult at first, and maybe half way there I collapsed a couple of times. But then after that everything just seemed to be very easy so that I could make it there in plenty of time before the herd came by.

You had to make every shot count. With seven shells, you get seven caribou from them. And I had to get seven; if I didn't, I'd be in trouble. Luckily, I got eight, with seven shots, because I shot two with one—I killed two with one shot—I got eight. And yet, I went back home and I told my grandfather that I got six. He always knew everything that I was doing there. He knew when I fell a couple of times. He watched me all the time. Because in those days they used to have these very powerful telescopes—the long, long powerful ones. And my grandfather had one. So he watched me all the way through, to there, and till I got back, and everything I did when I was there. He told me I got eight caribou, and I told myself I got six; I didn't know there were two others I had shot. So he told me I had eight. One of the things that, when they're teaching you these things—you know, in the view of a hunter—you're going to become a hunter and provide for your family. If they're going to teach you to be a hunter, they'll always watch. They will always know. It doesn't matter what distance you're going. My grandfather would watch me from here if I was going across the lake from here. He always knew what I was doing. So you couldn't cheat in anything; you had to do what you were told. If you don't do what you're told, and if they're teaching you to be able to survive on your own later on in the years, it seems like at the beginning they're giving you a hard time. And it's scary, because they'll talk to you like they were mad at you or something. But, really, that was their method of teaching, and years later you'd eventually come back and say, "Well, they were doing all this so I could learn to live on my own and survive on my own." But the teaching method was pretty hard. Some of them were pretty tough. Even very scary. But one had to learn them, and there were kind of a lot of teaching methods that we had to learn in order to become hunters and providers for our family.

One of the things that was taught, also to boys and girls—I guess it was taught to both, because it was very important—was how to fish the fishing spots, the fishing areas—lakes where the fishing was good. How you can fish a certain lake at a certain time of the year in the winter, spring, fall. And there were fish markers along some of these lakes as you travel that you'll notice that —there are rocks that are markers that are used. You had to learn what those markers were for and why they were there. When you learned to fish, you had to be able to read those markers, because unless you learned to read them you'd never become a good fisherman. The women were more into that because a lot of times, if the husbands were out travelling, or gone a long distance for a long period of time, the women had to be able to fish and to provide for their children while the husband has gone out to trap or to hunt. The women were—that was one of the things that was taught very much to the women was where to fish, when to fish, which time of the year fishing is good at one spot. That was one of the things that was taught very much to the women, just about fishing. Although men knew about fishing a great deal, that was something that was often passed on and taught to the women, because a lot of times a man who always provided for his family had gone maybe out on a trapline for a long period of time, and women didn't really have any other means of providing except to fish, because the dogs had gone with the husband—naturally the dogs would have gone with the husband for a long period of time—so the women had to learn to be a good fisher, to find spots that were good fishing spots. So they worked hard to be able to spot markers or be able to spot which part of the lake was better for fishing than other parts. It's something that would be done—and also provide for, and taught to a lot of the women—is in the area of fishing.

One of the strangest things about these fish markers—they just happen to be a lake. The lake may not be very big—it doesn't have to be very big in some cases. Take it from anywhere from 15 to maybe 2500 yards from the shore up there would be a fish marker sitting. The fish marker normally sits on top of a large rock, or it could be a fairly small rock, but the main marker sits on the top of a rock, pointing to a certain location or pointing to a certain area in the lake. The best way to locate where it's pointing at is to take your direction from that marker to look over to the other side of the lake. There will be some kind of a mark or something you could notice on the other side of the lake. And to be able to pinpoint the exact part of the good fishing location would be get direction from the marker to the other side of the lake, and the distance from the marker to the edge of the lake to the shore—the distance must always be the same from the marker to the lake shore, from the lake shore to the lake—those two distances must be exactly the same, or the distance from the fish marker with another marker on the other side must be exactly in between there. You could miss it by just a few inches or just a few feet—by anything from maybe from here to that chair. You couldn't get nothing there. I would be in the exact spot and I would be catching all kinds of fish, and you couldn't. That's why those markers are so important as to exactly what location they're pointing out, and these fish markers are—you'd think they'd be quite easy to read, and yet you have to be able to—you're going to catch fish—you know there's fish in there if there's a marker there. Anywhere you travel where there's a fish marker, there's always going to be fish there. Thousands, in some locations and in some areas. But you have to be able to find the exact spot. With the markers, the distance again must be from the fish marker to the lake, to the shore of the lake, from that shore down to the lake must be the same distance, or from the marker to the other side of the lake—you'll see another marker there—must be in between it exactly. Unless you can pinpoint that particular spot exactly, you'll never learn to catch fish by using fish markers.

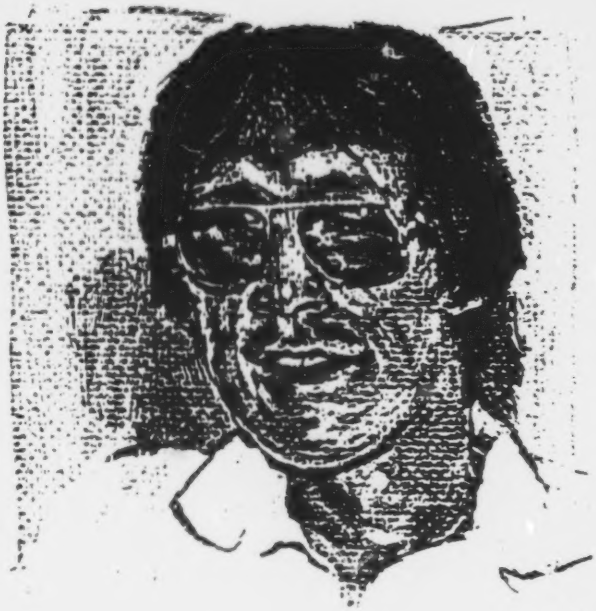
One of the things—sometimes these fish markers that are sitting on—sometimes—they're usually sitting on either a fairly big rock, some of them not so big—it depends how they're made. One of the other things that's difficult to pinpoint is sometimes there's no markers on the other side of the lake, so you have to depend on what you can line up on this fish marker to wherever it happens to be pointing. Now, that's not easy, because unless you can walk a straight line from here to where the marker's pointing, you're always going to miss the spot again. So one of the easiest way to do that is, if it happens to be in the winter, you walk from the marker to the edge of the lake and put a marker there—maybe a snow block or something. Use that snow block as a line-up, for lining up purposes to that main marker when you're walking down to the lake. That's one of the easiest ways to spot or to pinpoint where the marker happens to be pointing at.

One of the things about these fish markers, they represent different locations for fishing. Or, one of the major ones are the ones that sitting a few hundred yards from the shore, from the lake shore, anywhere from 1500, 2000, 2500 yds. from the lake shore. Those are the major markers, and those are the ones you have to be able to use and to learn more than any other kind of markers. These are the ones that tell you that fishing is good in this lake—and now we're talking about those markers now, that are on the other side of the lake here. That's where they are, and those particular markers are the ones that we're talking about. The fishing is really good there. There's one kind of particular marker that he's talking about is one that's here now. This one is quite a few hundred yards from the shore of the lake, Baker Lake, where it's located, and yet this is one of the ones which is very difficult to pinpoint exactly where those fish are. And yet you know there are fish there, somewhere. Part of the reason for that is because game and fish, even fish as much as caribou and many of the game, are very important to the Inuit. One has to be able to take only what one needs, in order that other people don't abuse the plentiful of fish in there. Sometimes they make these fish markers difficult to pinpoint, to find out exactly where the location or the area of good fishing is. That's for protection, and also for—also so that you save some for your neighbours next year, or maybe someone will come by who wants you to move away from there so there will be some left for them. So it was not only a simple matter of how to learn how to read and to use a good fish marker, because there are other types of markers as well. Some, right along the lake shore. Those are the ones that are—right along the shore of the lake are the ones that, well, you can just walk anywhere in this area here and there'll be all kinds of fish there. The particular ones are the ones that are away from the lake—15-200 yds. from the lake. Those are the ones that are pointing to the exact spot where you have to fish where you can catch thousands by thousands. Some particular pointers or markers are right along the lake shore. And the important thing about the fact—those markers are put in such a way that some of them are difficult to read. They'll fool you, even though you think you've got the right spot, they'll fool you. But yet that is being done, that is being made that way for a very particular reason, and that is the fact that some time people may tend to abuse the plentiful, sometimes, in some areas. Because even in those days there were always some people who abused the use of plenty of fish and caribou. So this has always gone on, even many years ago. In order to prevent that happening, and also in order to be able to provide some, save some, for your neighbours, one had to be very smart. So that, if you were making a good fish marker, you'd make it so that only so many people could read it—only a few knew the exact spot. That's one of the markers—that's why those major markers are pretty important to learn because they could represent something that maybe we may not be able to find the exact spot for a long time. I know this particular one took us a good number of years before we could find that exact spot. Now, my grandfather used to tell me about this, that it's there—that marker's there—and even when my grandfather was still around, I used to look for the exact spot of the good fishing there, and I never found it. I found that spot quite a while after my grandfather died, but that shows the importance of markers—that you have to be able to learn them and to know what the meanings are.

One thing about those markers, particularly the fish markers were put up a long, long time ago, because my grandfather used to tell me that they'd been there for many, many years, even before his grandfather's time. So I take it they've been there for a long, long time. They were put up by our ancestors many, many years ago. I guess one of the reasons why we knew them, and the reason why we had to learn them, was ever since—whenever it was the time these markers were put up and made—they had to learn them from the time someone put a marker here—particularly like he's just used an example, that one has been there for a long, long time. I don't know how long. But yet I had to learn to be—that's one of the things that I learned—how to fish in the winter by using a fish marker—from that particular one. And yet it took a long time for me to find the exact spot. Although those boxes have been put up a long time ago many, many years ago, they were passed down from my grandfather's grandfathers. My great grandfather, I guess, passed them down to my grandfather, my great grandfather. They had to be passed down to all the generations so that these generations could survive, and I was fortunate to be born in the years when they were still teaching us how to use them, how to spot them.

One of the things about the land is that it's not so much that one always feels attached to the land itself, but being on the land—just being up there today—you know, you leave town and you want to go out and get away from the town for a while. Being out there is very peaceful. It's not that you're very happy about being out there all the time, but there's something out there that calms you down, and it's very peaceful, very enjoyable, because there's so much to see out there, so much to offer. Being, living in a community like in town, being in a community all the time, some days you have good days, some days you're happy, but more often you're thinking of being out there again a great deal. For the land itself out there has something to offer and yet, in return when you're out there alone—especially when you're out there by yourself and you're all alone, maybe in the middle of nowhere, or a long distance from the community, out there on the land by yourself, it's so peaceful. There's so much to see and so much to learn. It doesn't matter what season of the year you happen to be out there; the land always has something to offer. To teach you something. And at the same time the land itself, although maybe teaching you something, in return you are still giving back to that very land that has offered you a learning experience, in that if you leave the land undisturbed, in your own way you've given back what the land has been able to give you. It's something that the land gives you—something that you don't forget after—something that you always remember, you always have that picture in your mind. Rather than taking it and then keeping it to yourself, it's something you give back to the land. In a way, being out on the land is more peaceful than living in a community because it always has something that is peaceful about it or something exciting to learn, something new about it.

Silas Arngna'naaq



Shortly after arriving in Baker Lake, I began designing an interactive display for a new visitors' centre that was to be housed in the old Hudson's Bay Company warehouse in Baker Lake.[76] This work put me in touch with the local economic development officer, Silas Arngna'naaq. After assisting with the business of getting the design project underway, he took an interest in the whole research project, and agreed to speak on tape about his knowledge of and experience with the land.

In his mid-thirties, married, and having lived in town his whole life, Silas characterized himself as a "weekend" hunter, meaning that his land experience was limited to short forays away from town. He had travelled with his father, Luke Arngna'naaq, and with his grandparents, from time to time, but basically his knowledge of lands far away from the community, such as the Thelon River, was limited to what he had heard from his parents and grandparents. He was quick to point out that he had no personal experience with the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

The day we spoke was Silas's last day on the job as economic development officer in Baker Lake, because he had asked for leave to run (against his boss and minister of economic development, Gordon Wray) in the 1991 territorial election.

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[76] This display, done under contract for the GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism, was taken on to raise research funds.

Silas was elected to the Territorial Legislature in October of 1991. As a result of his pending candidacy at the time of our conversation, there were elements of our discussion that he asked not be used. That wish has been respected, but there is still much of value in what he contributed to the research.

Silas was a very interesting consultant because of his solid grounding in community-based Inuit culture. He had learned about the land from his parents and a grandparents, but he himself had not spent much time on the land getting personal experience. And yet he was able to provide a solid sense of how strange it was for his grandparents when the first white people arrived by plane and why they had every reason to obey white rule, especially with respect to the Sanctuary. Silas also helped me understand a concept called *ajurnarmat*, meaning "it can't be helped," which was knowledge derived directly from Inuit experience on the land.[77] I was surprised, however, to hear from Silas about the absence of other tangible traditions and practices linking Inuit living in Qamanittuaq with the ancestors who lived on the land. We spoke in his home:

> I've never been to the Thelon Game Sanctuary. I've only heard about it. My father has talked about it. Other people have talked about it. I was born right outside the community. But from talking to people about it, it's a place where people don't go in to hunt. And if they do go in, they don't hunt. So they don't generally go in there. There is not a lot I can say. I haven't been there. If there is anything to be said about that, it is that it is preserving wildlife and natural habitat, whatever kinds of animals live there. People generally stay away from that area. In terms of benefiting the people, I don't see any direct benefits, other than to say that it is preserving wildlife, like muskoxen and caribou.

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[77] *Ajurnaarmat* (it can't be helped/that's life) is mentioned in an article about the people of Igloolik (Semeniuk, 1982). This anthropologist calls the concept a "unique philosophy of living and dying," and illustrates it by telling the story of a woman who had recently rolled over on her baby during the night, suffocating it. Her response to questions about this event was "ajurnarmat," saying "It was bad enough that it happened, without worrying." (36)

That area where the Thelon Game Sanctuary is now, at the time that it was imposed on the people, the people were hunting there, hunting and fishing there. In the sixties, or whenever it was that the Sanctuary was formed, they were told that they could not go in there any more. If they did go in hunting and fishing, they would be arrested. There wasn't much the people could do. They had no choice. And the people that lived around the Beverly Lake area were not able to go in there to hunt and fish, which limited the people from going west to hunt from where they were living. They couldn't go in and get them. There were people living there. So yes, they definitely do care. So if the Sanctuary could be lifted, or moved over to the west, then I think more people would be willing to go out there and hunt. But that's hard to say, because there are only a few people now who do go out, go over that far. But historically, people did hunt there.

The police were the only regulating body at the time. They were the first kadlunaaq to come up north, other than the missionaries and the trading companies. They did a lot of travelling, by dog team. What I tend to think, may not necessarily be what took place, or what people did at the time, but from what I understand, when white man came up here, they had such authority, they had very interesting—I don't know how to put it—they had more things that the people could benefit from. They were able to do things that you couldn't imagine could be done, such as bringing in caterpillars, front end loaders. They could fly planes, that would fly up in the air! They had vehicles that could travel without human power. With all of this, I think the people were overwhelmed, by southern people, by language. Because the people who came up were so aggressive, and the people here were—I don't know how to put it—they don't speak out. They're not aggressive, I guess. And they were run over by the first folks that came up. They took the words of the people who first came up, and they were afraid of them. They would do anything for them. So I think any laws, or anything that people brought up, their own laws, their own way of living, their own culture and so on, was so amazing, so overwhelming, that anything they said or did, the people would do anyway.

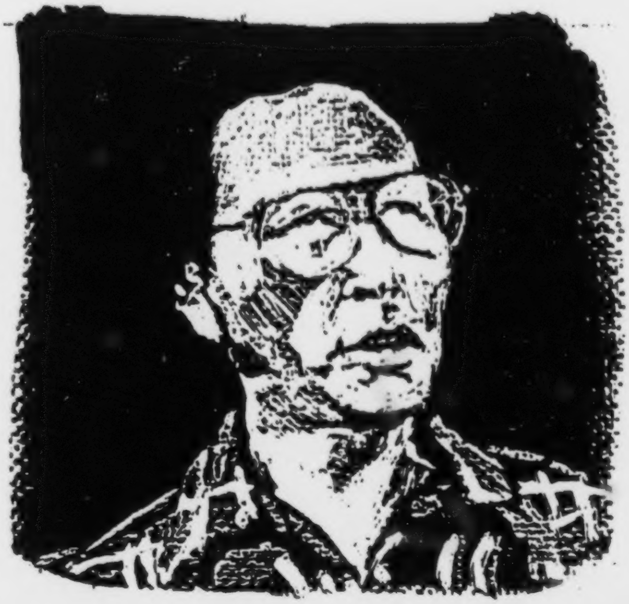
Land means a lot to me, to the people around here. First of all, because of our way of living, which is hunting and fishing. It's a way of life, a source of food. Now because we are living in a new generation, a new lifestyle has now come to us, I think people are always going to turn to things like money, houses, living in the community—that kind of thing. The people, I think, are going to have to start talking about what is out there in terms of minerals. So in that way, it is also important to the people—not just the wildlife, the renewable resources, but also for the non-renewable resources too. And for hunting, because wildlife does not sit still, it migrates, then it takes an awful lot of land to cover to get anywhere with wildlife. I don't think we can say we are going to take the lake and the land surrounding the lake for point five miles inland from the lake, that is going to be our land. We don't want to be limited to that, because wildlife are not limited to boundaries. That's what's important to the people.

The way people talk, and the way I've been trained about the land, I would say yes, the land is a teacher. If you and I were talking, or if—say—I was talking to my parents, and they were not able to get out and about, they could tell me stories, they could tell me this and that, but there is really nothing sinking into my head until I've experienced it. So I'd say, I could go along with what they are saying, but get out there and do the things that they talked about. In that way they would say, I could tell you endless amounts of stories about the weather, but you won't learn it unless you go out there and *watch* how the clouds are moving, which way the wind's going, and how that's going to affect the next day, when the moon is red, what does that mean. If the wind is shifting one way, and shifting another way in the next hour or so, what does that mean? I can tell you and you'll forget them right away, because it's just words. If you're out there watching it and experiencing it, then you'll learn. That's what my parents have taught me. I can't predict what the weather will be like today or tomorrow, but from what my parents have taught me, I could give a rough idea as to what it would be like. But I could never be as accurate as some of the old people who have been out there and have experienced prediction of the weather and who have watched the weather for years. It's just like anything else. If you're studying to be an apprentice carpenter, you're not going to learn how to build the house with books, you're not going to learn how to build the house in a classroom. You're going to have to go out and build some houses yourself. It's just the same, I think. You could tell me stories—endless stories—about some place you have been to, but I have no idea what it's like. I won't know what you're talking about unless I have been there.

The land is the whole basis of Inuit culture. People's personalities are formed based on the land and the weather. The entire personality of the community. The way the community runs, everything is based on what they've learned from around them. They can't rush anything. You can't control the weather. You have to go when the weather is ready. It governs the whole mentality of the people here. Sort of it can't be helped. It can be helped "ajurnarmat" so don't fret about it. Disasters hit. Children died. Storms hit and your dogs freeze. What good does it do to go into a massive depression. You have to just deal with it. The word is ajurnarmat (a-yung-nar-moot). It can't be helped. To understand the concept fully, you have to understand what it's like to sit for a week when the wind is blowing and can't go anywhere. Or your canoe gets wrecked on a rock. You can't call the insurance company to have it replaced. You can't jump up and down. What good would that do? You've got to replace it. If it is a natural happening, like if all around us there erupted volcanoes, and there was nothing we could do, then that phrase would apply. But if it was man saying "You can't hunt here any more" then that's not ajurnarmat. It's not because it can't be helped. It's because it could be helped. It was a wilful act. The people have so much respect for the land, respect is the word—just as you said there is nothing you can do about a storm, the land has so much control over the way people live. You have to respect the land. But when we say land we refer to the environment, the atmosphere outside, the area that we live in.

There is a tradition when a gets a first caribou that there is big celebration. We just had one for our son Nathan. This just happens with the first caribou of your life. There may have been other traditions, whereby when you catch a caribou, you did something with a portion of the caribou. But I don't know that. A lot of the rituals that did take place as far as the shamans, the drum dancing, all these things that took place, any kind of religion that the people had, was lost as soon as the missionaries came. It's not practised any more. It's gone. There may be something, but it's something that's underground. People are not going to come out and say this is the way—as a people—this is our religion. The ways that they conducted themselves in camp all had meaning. Where the tents were set. The way the rocks were set in front of the tent meant something. Even in the tent there were certain ways that the old ladies did their thing. In the iglu too. So there was all that. I've heard my mom talk about it, but I've never really experienced it, so I don't really know what was involved. There's not many people who are willing to talk about the rituals and the kind of things that took place with the shamans and that type of thing anymore. There aren't many people that know. If there are, and they have told stories about it, they were transcribed and a book or something was written and nobody ever saw it again. I'm sure there's lots of them, lots of stories, different legends.

Hugh Ikoe



I first met Hugh Ikoe in the summer of 1988 when he assisted the work I was doing by lending a truck battery to supply electricity to an HF radio when the original power supply failed. At that time he was employed as an expediter for Urangesellschaft, the mining company involved in development of the uranium mine southwest of the community. During field work for this project in 1991, he was in the same position. Even though the mine project was technically "on hold," Hugh seemed still to have plenty to do in keeping two drilling crews supplied, fed, and happy.

Hugh was born on the land near Ferguson Lake, in the Kazan River watershed, about 100 miles south of Baker Lake. His father was Scottie and his sister, who is a local outfitter, is Joan Scottie. Hugh lived on the land with his family, more or less, until he was 11 or 12 years old, when they moved into town. It was only then that he went to school. After school in Baker Lake, he went to a school in Churchill for three years, and then attended college in Winnipeg for a year, studying to be a machinist. Life as an early adult involved a variety of jobs in the south, a marriage to a white woman, with whom he had children, and a subsequent divorce. In 1978, he returned to Baker Lake for his father's funeral, and decided to stay.

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His first jobs in the north after that were doing geophysical work that took him across the barrenlands, along and up the Thelon and beyond. That work led to a connection with the uranium find at the Lone Gull site. He has worked for Urangesellschaft Canada Limited ever since. Aside from the first ten or eleven years of his life, Hugh's experience with the land has been in connection with mining, and, of course, through the stories of his family elders.

The important aspect of Hugh's comments for this research was the way in which he presented a much more hard-nosed and pragmatic (and southern-sounding) view of Inuit relationships with the land, current and future. In that sense, his contribution served as a balancing agent in the Qamanittuaq interviews, in the sense that his realistic and development-oriented view of land countered more romantic and hands-off approaches to land offered by his elders. He also illustrated the fact that while the Thelon area may loom large in the minds of his fellow community members who seem oblivious to the fact that it is geographically removed a distance of several hundred kilometres from the community, Hugh's perception of the situation is that it is simply too far away from the community to be part of everyday reality. This, too, was part of the balance added by Hugh to the project. We spoke in his office:

> When I was first growing up living out on the land they taught like everybody you know, how to live off the land, were out on the land. And for living fairly quite uncivilized. And then when we moved into Baker Lake and that is when we started going to school and I made a lot, we left a lot of that behind, like even though we still go out hunting today a large part of that life style is gone and like we can never go back to it. But what we are learning now in school, like you know, we're going to have to make some changes somewhere along the line. We just can't hang on to the land and say that, well you know, we're only going to use it for hunting and we don't want any mining exploration around, up or around this area. I think, at some point, you know, we will have to start thinking about getting some kind of industry up here because we're living in a civilized world now and we can't depend on government all the time. I mean, I think it's a good idea, I mean nobody wants to hear about culture

and that sort of thing, okay, everybody wants to be able to go out hunting and keep our culture. That, about that feeling that Inuit people have about the land, like it's so strong that I don't think we will ever forget it, you know, we never will stop hunting, we will never forget our culture. But at the same time, we've got to make a living too. I spoke to a lot of the older people and they say that, well, when we lived out on the land we were fairly uncivilized living off the land and their idea was that if you ever move into a settlement that you'd feel like a really rich person because you got everything, you never have to go out. But what a lot a people, a lot of people that did live off the land what they're saying is that, gee I'm worse off, you know, I'm poorer than I was when I was living on the land because you know, there are a lot of people that are, like they don't even know like they are looking for a meal from day to day. And my mother was working for Social Services by looking after some of the older people and she was saying that some of the people, like a lot of the people do not literally have just a small piece of meat to eat. There are a lot of very poor people in this town.

Like, well, we'll will have to come up with some sort of industry and if we're going to come over some sort of industry. I can't really think of anything other than mining. I mean there's always fisheries too, but that sort of ties in with the land too. Wherever there is a mine like Thompson, you know, they've always been very good to the people. And I think that if we're going to talk about opening a mine, first of all I don't think, like with the environment concern, everybody's got nowadays, you know, you can't just mine and not think about the environment. You can't get away with it anymore. Like the whole world is environmentally conscious and I don't think. I think you can have mines around, like anywhere up north, and still be able to maintain it because I mean it would create like a lot of opportunities, not just in terms of jobs but apprenticeship, and there's a lot of people who want to go back to the land like I do and most mining companies, you know, you're working two weeks in and two weeks out. So if there was a mine, I think a lot of people would be able to go back to the land. You make fairly good money working in a mine, and I don't think it would be that much different than say like having a house in town and working, and going back to Baker Lake every time you get two weeks off. I think it would be a lot easier to get yourself a house out on the land and stay out there and do your two weeks and do your hunting and look after your house and before two weeks. I mean for a lot of people this is, like it would be like a dream come true. I mean if we could work 7 days a week out on the land, I mean a lot of us would. But we grew up out there.

But we can't live off the land any more. Okay? We can't, nobody's going to go back to the land. Nobody ever will. I mean if we're not going to go back to the land I mean, you know it's all very romantic all that, to think about why I'm really concerned about the land, I don't want to forget about my culture. I know that I'm not going to forget about my culture. And as far as children, our children are concerned, they will always know how to hunt. They'll always keep their culture. And if you want to open up some mines, it's going to destroy, I don't think it's going to destroy our way of life. I mean, change times, you know we're going through a lot of change already and I think that changes are inevitable. We can't just think about the land as being, well I lived off the land a long time ago, and I just want to keep it like that, the way it is. Okay, I mean that's, you know, it's a nice thought but you've got to make a living too, like the way we're living today, living in a town, going to school, our children are going to school.

I think I could write a small book about land and kids, learning and the changes that happen when you move into town. The changes all took place in quite a very short period of time. Like say in the past 20 years. Like a lot of the older people didn't really know how to, how to survive in a settlement. When we lived off the land, basically we had a religion that kept everybody in line. We had, you know we had a system where that's probably been in place for thousands of years. And they knew how to look after their children. They knew how to teach them. But when they moved into, like when everybody started living together, like people just weren't used to that. As far as our social life is concerned, this is very new to us. Nowadays nobody really knows how to bring up children in a society like this. Most of the kids got beyond control of their parents, not just a few but a whole lot of people. This is, like as far as like, social life is concerned.

I think the Thelon Game Sanctuary is important. I think it's important to have a change for this. But like for myself, living in Baker Lake, I never, like a lot of people in Baker Lake, I never really have to think about the Thelon Game Sanctuary because it's a little bit too far and we don't have to go that far to go hunting. So for us, my hunting and teaching someone how to live off the land, I never really have to go to the Thelon Game Sanctuary because I could do it around Baker Lake, but I think it is still important to have like parks—parks and heritage rivers are nice gestures, but they're not going to make that much difference as far as my life and our future is concerned. It's not going to make that much difference I don't think. Because I think before Thelon and say like the Thelon and Kazan were not heritage rivers you know, we went up and down both rivers hunting and fishing and if they do become heritage rivers people are still going to go up Thelon and Kazan all the time and I don't think it's going to make that much difference. As far as I would like for fishing and hunting I don't think it's going to make that much difference.

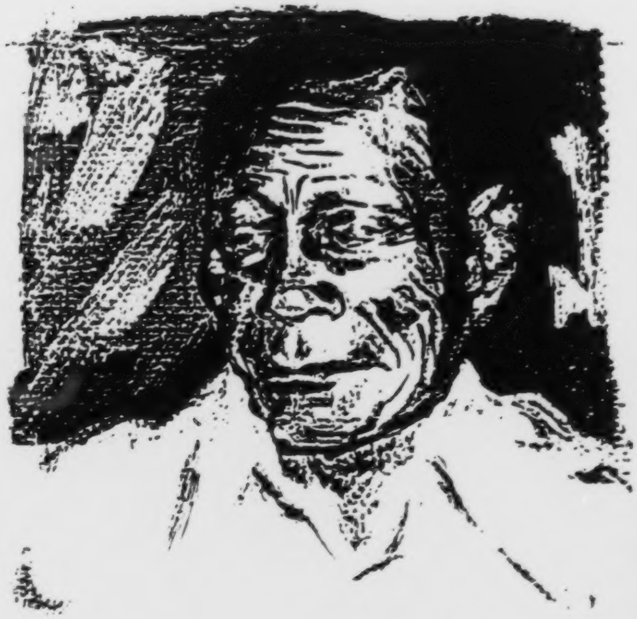
A lot of us still take our children out to the land, I mean, I think I feel that we describe the feeling about the land. I mean I got a very strong feeling about the land and there was a time like you know, about mining, dams, development, that sort of thing, was sort of wary about that, sort of concerned about that, but at the same time I've got to think about making a living too. I mean I know for a fact that I'm not going to live off the land, my children are not going to live off the land, but sure, I mean I've got a good feeling about land, but all our families go out and we get together and take the whole family, children and all, like every so often, like it gives them a good feeling about being on the land, about the land. And as far as the older people are concerned yeah, they got that, they've got this feeling about the land and like it will never go away, but for today's generation, I think they will have that feeling, but at the same time they'll be thinking about making it, making some sort of, like developing the land a little bit and making a living off the land, I mean they will have to think about making a living too, like making money and that, I mean we're all being taught about money nowadays but we need that dollar to make a living just to survive. And I think the next generation is going to be very much thinking about yeah, they'll be thinking about the land, it's all very romantic to have this vision about the land, leave it alone, don't touch it, but we've got to make a living too and I think a lot of the younger generation will be thinking, I think that will eventually go away that feeling. It's hard to say, but like I said, I mean, like inevitable. I don't think they will forget about the land. I think it will just carry on from one generation to the next and I think you could learn everything that you need to know about land— As far as I think you could teach our children about the land and live just the way we live, it's up to each family, I mean, do you want your children to know how to go about the land and all that. I mean that's what my whole family is doing, but we realized it's important to go to school and get a good education. Okay, we'll let the teachers take care of that part and we'll push them to go to school, but when they're not in school then it's up to us to teach them about living off the land and encouraging them to go out to the land. I mean we've been doing that for a while and I, I don't see any problem with it.

I know the land can teach you and survive you in two different ways. One was like the way we lived before, we lived off the land, we survive off the land, like in a different way than we do today. But no matter which way, I mean, no matter which lifestyle that I choose to live, it will still survive me. It's survived me in the past just living off the land, not knowing about, you know not really not knowing about mining, that sort of thing, just living off the land, animals and fish. Okay, it survived me, it did me good. Now that part is gone. Now it's very, very hard to get away from the land, I mean not to think about the land, it's like money, okay? It's just that it's changed just a little bit, do you know what I mean? Okay? We lived off that land before, we couldn't get away from it, okay, now that part is pretty much gone, but now, we're going to have development, it's still surviving me and it's still going to survive everybody.

Like, okay, the way I feel about it right now is that you know, I live two different worlds. I lived off the fairly primitive way of life when I was growing up, and now I'm living a fairly civilized lifestyle up here, but still depending on the land, because I work for the mining company. But I'm still able to go back occasionally to that, going hunting off the land, and that, I know that I'm never going to forget that. I'm going to make sure that nobody forgets that too.

Your culture wants to move very fast, where we tend, we are fairly laid back and we take our time. Like, you know, depending on what we're dealing with, what we're talking about, you might want to do it very fast, whereas I'm just going to take my time. But at the same time, if I want to do something, like, say, let's talk about my land claims, then as far as I'm concerned this is a piece of land. I want this piece of land, I don't want any mineral exploration, development of any kind. How long is it going to take you to get down to settle that problem? Years and years and years.

Barnabus Piryuaq



Hours spent with 67-year-old elder Barnabus Piryuaq were among the most pleasant of all times in Baker Lake. He was alive and engaging in his recounting of tales from the land. He laughed a lot, made me feel welcome, and tried always to answer my questions fully, sometimes going around a point several times to make sure that he was getting through. Barnabus told me that he was born on the south shore of Baker Lake, due south of where the town is now, in 1924. When he was 16 years old, he had his own dog team, and had had one for some time. In about 1949, he and his family moved west out toward Beverly Lake and spent nearly ten years living in the Thelon River watershed on the shores of Beverly and Aberdeen Lakes and north toward the Back River. In 1958, he told me, he began working for the Canadian Wildlife Service, acting as a guide for wildlife officers John Zimmerman and Ron Hawkins, who were in the area surveying game. This work involved him in long solo jaunts out west of Baker Lake, into Thelon River country, to carry out a government plan to poison wolves with strychnine tablets inserted into fox carcasses.

Barnabus became aware of the Thelon Game Sanctuary in the 1930s. He would have been between six and ten years of age at that time, but it would seem that he was among the first (or at least the first to remember or admit) who knew about the imposition of the Sanctuary boundary. He told of having five gallons of kerosene to last a family the winter and many other stories, but he also spoke of his deep and abiding concern and respect for land and all that it represents. It is significant, I think, that after we spoke, Barnabus took me outside to show off the komatiq he was making out of laminated beams left over from house construction *and* to show us the huge iron pot full of boiled caribou meat that was, for now, his tangible connection to the land. Through John he told me how important it was to have this meat, how much it meant to him to know that it was there and being cooked on an outside fire in the traditional way.

Like most of his contemporaries to whom I spoke, Barnabus talked about mind pictures and the ways in which he had come to know the land. While this was an important contribution to the research, it was his thoughts on land and sharing that I valued most. It was fascinating to hear him muse on how the sharing ethic (involving money) in the community is quite different in his mind from the cooperation necessary for Inuit people to survive on the land. Better than any other consultant, Barnabus articulated the delicate balance between the human need to survive and the land's ability to provide, and how the subtleties of this situation can only be realized through personal experience on the land. I was intrigued to hear him say that hiring elders to take school children out on the land is quite different from kids living on the land as part of a family group. We spoke in his house:

> Knowing the land is one old tradition I don't want to leave out because it is as much a part of our life now as it was in the past and always will be. Inuit didn't have maps or compasses but looked at the ground in order not to get lost. Around here, in December or January, the northwest wind begins to form very clear snow drifts. When they have been formed even a blizzard will not destroy them and they will stay until it doesn't get dark anymore. Snow might form around them, but they will still be

visible. Rounded and smooth snow drifts form on the lee side of a projection and taper off gradually to the ground. From these you can tell which way you are travelling, even when visibility is poor from time to time. We can still use these signs as we did in the old days. Visibility used to get poor and it got dark at night, and it still does—the conditions are the same. Even today, learning to tell direction from the snow drifts has to be learned, as travelling on the land is becoming more and more common. Watch carefully where the wind is coming from when snow drifts form from the big storms in December and January. Sometimes the drifts are a little different each year—they turn a little more this way or that way than the year before. When I travel the length of Baker Lake, I cut the snow drifts at a little different angle each year.[78]

(Laughing) I remember the first time I saw a map. It was 1941. One of the RC missionaries that lived here in Baker Lake, had a companion that lived up here. He wanted me to guide him there and showed me where he wanted to go using the map (he chuckles). Of course, trying to learn to read a map for the first time is difficult, but fortunately, the priest I was travelling with taught me how to use the map, and he would tell me that if we kept travelling in this direction we would run into a large lake. The priest knew how to read the map. It makes it easier. In those years, 1941, I was a young man. But all of the older people, they had all of the picture in their minds. I was a young man at the time. I had not travelled this distance before. Although I was aware of this area, because we had lived in this area before. So I had all this section pictured in the back of my mind, so I knew what it was like. But it was the very first time I had to travel in this direction, and I had never been in that particular area before, so it makes it difficult.

Being an Inuk, you would never get lost. I was never afraid of getting lost. I never did get lost. Because simply those snowdrifts are always in one direction. Right from the beginning of the trip, you know which way the snowdrifts were. You always follow them on an angle. And if you follow them on the right angle, you know you'll eventually get to where you want to go. There was no fear of getting lost. I never did get lost.

Perhaps one of the differences is that people in southern Canada are more used to buying a small piece of land, to live on it and to own it, sort of thing. To compare that to the Inuit, who have lived in this territory for so many years, maybe just to illustrate the difference is to use an example and say, when someone here in Baker Lake say "our land" and somebody in another community thousands of miles away, like someone on TV, when they say "our land", we in Baker Lake automatically, the Inuit automatically think "our land."

One of the things that has been talked about, and the present existence of the game Sanctuary, would be perhaps if there is a need to redo it or change it into something else, one of the major things that people would like to see is that they had family living just outside the game Sanctuary and they find themselves in the position of having to find game in order to survive. That person should be able to go inside and get game from inside the Thelon Game Sanctuary, at least even once so that they could survive on it. In the years gone by, even if you were hungry or starving, you weren't allowed to go in there to kill game. It was there but you couldn't go in there to get it. With changes in that particular regulation, people should be able to go in there and hunt when there is a need for it. With that kind of changes, the protection should remain as it is, or if there is a better way to have the protection remain, to have it remain there. One of the most noticeable things about it, and the advantage of having the game Sanctuary is that prior to the establishment of the game Sanctuary, the numbers of muskoxen and grizzly bears were decreasing to very small numbers. Since the establishment of the Thelon Game Sanctuary the numbers have increased to greater numbers, both bears and muskox. There is a noticeable increase in the numbers of these animals since the establishment of this area. One of the things that has been talked about is to keep the game Sanctuary the way it is for the protection of the animals. Because, who knows! Although the number of caribou is very high now, in the future, that number may go down again, because of the radiation from the mining site, or something like that, or some other reasons. And if the protection of those animals remains as it is now and into the future, they will always tend to increase, and they will always have a chance to increase, provided, of course, that an individual or family be allowed to go in there to get what they need when they really need it.

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[78] This is an excerpt from Piryuaq, 1986, 20.

When we saw a herd of caribou, an elder would tell us which ones to kill and which ones to leave alone. When we shot the wrong one, we got scolded and were told that we had wasted our bullets on something that was worthless. In a herd there are cows and calves, those without, yearlings, calves and young bulls. Our elders told us to shoot the bulls only in June, July and August as that is the time when they are fattest and the skins are good for clothing. When an elder looked over our kill upon arriving home and saw that we broke one of the laws, we got scolded. Then the matter was dropped and not mentioned again unless we made the same mistake again; then we got scolded again.

These were the laws that controlled hunters. You never had to wait to be scolded; it was dealt with right away and then the subject was dropped. In winter cows would be killed because the meat is good, but the skin is not good for clothing except for making mitts. The good hunters who followed the laws and killed only the ones they wanted to kill were called *kulawak*. In the winter they wouldn't kill a cow that had a calf but only a cow that had none. Only if caribou were scarce and meat hard to get could a hunter break this law, because then it was for survival.[79]

Something that has happened in the past, and it will probably happen again in the future, is like the year 1954. That year was a very hot summer. The month of July was so hot that caribou were dying by the thousands because of the heat all over this area here. And then in the following years it was very hard for families because there was no game. It was very hot that summer and the mosquitoes were very bad.

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[79] This is an excerpt from Piryuaq, 1986, 14.

The caribou weren't eating anything, they were just running and then they just drop dead, thousands of them. People have always been able to survive and live on the land. They knew the land so well that it was a simple matter of being able to tell why in that year so many caribou died. There was no reason to blame anyone. There was no reason to say somebody did it. It was just the simple reason that that summer was very hot, and it was bound to happen. And even to this day, you can always tell how the weather is going to be like—if the weather is going to be hot in the month of July, automatically you will know that it's going to be a lot of wildlife that is going to die. To use an example of this month, this month it's been pretty cool. The temperature down to 16 or so and even if it warms up, it has been pretty windy. So if somebody says that a lot of game die this summer because it has been so hot, I wouldn't believe them (laughing). Again, during the month of August, you may have some pretty hot days, and one automatically knows that even if it is hot in August because most of the flies have gone and it gets cold during the night so again wildlife is not going to die, even if it gets hot during the month of August. Getting back to that summer of '54. Those animals that died of heat were not even used for dog food. Because any time an animal die from heat, they're no good for anything. Even the dogs could eat them and it would not make a difference. There was really nothing you could get from them.

I imagine that one of the best ways to try to explain how much people appreciate the land and why the land is so important is this. People have always lived on the Thelon River. People have always lived on the Kazan River and on the Back River. Although these people have lived quite a distance from each other, they still have the same respect and the same idea of protecting the land, and looking after the land, and being able to survive, and to be thankful for what the land has been able to give to them, both in the way that it provides for your body, for your meals and your clothing. If the land wasn't able to provide for you, your physical body would not survive, naturally your spiritual body—your spiritual being—would not survive once your physical body was not able to survive. Therefore the respect for the land and having to be able to be thankful for what it's been able to provide for you comes from both your physical being and your spiritual being.

To illustrate the difference between the time people had to survive and live on the land. If I was out hunting with someone from another area and I happened to end up getting four caribou when the other guy didn't get any. Because of the fact that they knew that the land had provided them with four caribou, I would give two to the other guy. And that's being able to help one another in one way, but also it's being able to appreciate what we were able to get from the land itself. Today, living in the community, you could give me a thousand dollars and I wouldn't give a dollar of it to anyone else. Now everything is yours today. There is no more sharing of that kind. There is no more respect among the people themselves. The thousand dollars is going to be mine and nobody else's. Not only does this apply to the younger people today, it applies to myself too. Even me, I wouldn't give away money if somebody gave me some money. The idea today is what I have is mine, kind of thing.

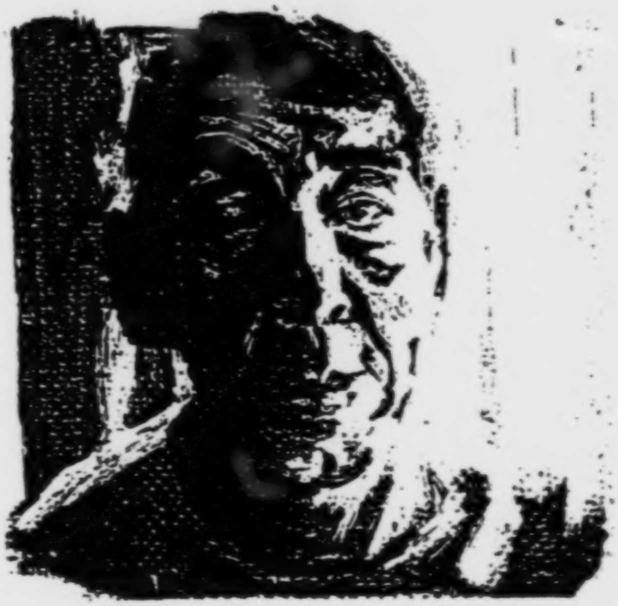
One of the things that came from the parents and the grandparents, particularly the grand parents because they were the ones who were living in a lot harder times than we did. They were the ones who taught you not only how to respect and be thankful for what you can get from the land, but also how to respect your fellow man, again getting back to the idea that we must help one another in order to be able to survive on the land and to be able to take what you need from the land without going beyond what is your need. You take what you need, what you require, but not beyond. And yet, all of that is a part of learning how much the land can provide for you and how much you can get back in return.

Perhaps one of the best ways to explain that to you, how people would do in their own way in giving back to the land that has provided so much for them, people from different locations, or different tribes or different areas had different ways of doing these kind of things. One group of people, in order for them to say thanks, would do what they felt was best, in the way of giving back in their own view. Our way of giving back is by respecting the land as it is and by not disturbing the land, or, because in order for one to survive you had to be able to survive by either being able to get wildlife from the land itself or fish from the lakes, and in order for one to give back for what the land has been able to provide for you, is for one to leave it as it and to leave it as natural as possible. That, in our mind, was one way of giving back to the land for what it has been able to give to you. Other people may have had other ways of doing it differently.

As a child growing up, at the age of 12, one started to learn to hunt on your own. Not a long distance, because after all I was only 12, a young boy couldn't go very far, but far enough to kill a caribou. From that age on, you were already being taught and told what was beyond the camp itself. As you get older, they start to tell you what is beyond a longer distance. And as you start to learn to travel on your own, naturally they start to tell you what is out at a very long distance. When you were growing up and learning these things, you were always told what to expect at a longer distance, as you grow older. We talked about using a firearm at the age of 12. You were not just given a firearm and told to go out and get something now. They gradually teach you how to use that firearm and how to look after it properly. Once your father or your brother knew well enough that you could do it, you could use it properly, then they would let you go out a short distance at first, then farther and farther. Again, now today, it is different. Now they hire people to take kids out and teach them how to hunt (he laughs). These people who take out the kids are just out there because they're being paid to do it, not because they want to take time to teach individual child to be a hunter. Now it's different, eh. And the same thing applies to the young girls, then and today, the young ladies. In those years, your mother or your big sister would teach you how to sew caribou skins or anything that needed to be done. They would teach you how to be very good at it. Again, today, they have the same kind of program, but again the instructors are being paid to instruct the kids. And they don't really have the heart to do it properly. They're doing it because they're being paid to do it. Teaching today is different.

To use an example, when I talked earlier about having to use a map for travelling, I was already a middle aged person when I learned to use the map, something I'd never used before. Well today, although the kids may be learning some part of the Inuit culture, although they may not be learning the whole, or things that I had to learn when I was growing up, it's never really that much difficult because winter, every year, comes. Winter never changes from year to year. It always comes. It's always the same opportunity for us older people to teach the people of the younger generation how to survive and what to do about surviving. And if the community, the older people and the younger people, have an opportunity to get together, they could still be taught the things that I was taught as a boy. There wouldn't be any difficulty in that. One of the easiest things about learning how to travel and live on the land, that kind of learning is even easier than working in an office. Working in an office is more difficult than travelling and learning on the land (he chuckles). My children will always know. One of the things that is often misunderstood is the fact that from one family generation to another, to use one example, our family, my children, my own blood, my knowledge will always be passed onto them without me even having to take the effort to pass it onto them. Automatically, that knowledge is passed onto them. Too often that point is misunderstood by many people. The Inuit people, who were called Eskimos, their culture, their way of doing things, in their own way, is so much different than the way the Dene and Metis people do their cultural thing. From the non-native society. Some of the things that are done are difficult to understand or even to try to figure out why things are the way they are. But simply because, like I mentioned earlier, for my children, the knowledge that I have, the experiences that I have had automatically pass on to my children because they are part of me.

John Pudnak



The key person in the Baker Lake segment of this research was interpreter John Pudnak. John was born near Whale Cove in 1943, on the Hudson Bay coast and moved to Baker Lake, as a boy, in 1949. Taking advantage of every educational opportunity afforded him, John became fluent in both written and spoken Inuktitut and English and ended up, after a variety of jobs and job training schemes, becoming the first English/Inuktitut interpreter for the territorial government. It was fortuitous that John was available for this project. A man of seemingly limitless energy, he would rise every morning at four o'clock and walk, or fish, or hunt before taking on his various freelance translation tasks. Without him, as intellectual guide, interpreter, and friend in Baker Lake, the interview portion of the Baker Lake segment of this project would not have been as substantial as it is.

John's knowledge of the Thelon River and the Sanctuary was especially acute because he had served as a guide the previous summer for a run up the river to collect data for the Thelon River's nomination as a member of the Canadian Heritage River System. Three people—John Pudnak, Basil Tuluktuk and heritage river researcher David Murray—had gone up the river, in a 22-foot motor canoe, as far as Lookout Point. This was the first time John had been this far into the Sanctuary. He told me he was struck by the trees and all of the sand, particularly the eskers, and by the fact that when he got back to town, all people wanted to know was how many grizzly bears they'd seen.

We talked informally, and at length, on many occasions, either before or after interviews, or at other times. Twice we spoke on tape: once at the very beginning of the work in Baker Lake, to give him an idea of what I was doing and what I was hoping to ask of consultants from town; and once at the end of the Baker Lake work, sort of a summary discussion.

John's commentary helped coalesce ideas that had come from other consultants; ideas that others mentioned tangentially, John explained outright. For example, it was John who helped me understand the deferential attitude the Inuit had toward the R.C.M.P., as keepers of the Thelon Game Sanctuary law, and how he was quite sure that people had died of starvation on the periphery of the Sanctuary because they would not cross the border to hunt even though they knew there might be plentiful game there. John was the one who brought into focus the importance of "mind pictures" and stories in Inuit land knowledge. He taught me by explaining what he saw in his mind's eye and by telling me stories of his own experiences on the land, but as interpreter, he also spoke about those kinds of knowledge and how they fit in Inuit conceptions of land. John also spoke forthrightly about the arrival of the Christian missionaries to the world of the Caribou Inuit and of the difficulties encountered by his people in attempting to reconcile traditional spirituality with the idea of God as presented by Anglican and Catholic priests.

Perhaps the most important contribution John made to this research, however, was in helping me see a fundamental difference in attitude toward ethnographic research between the Inuit of Qamanittuaq and the Dene of Lutsel K'e. John was very positive—enthusiastic even—about contributing to this research, and while this same attitude was reflected more or less by all of the people to whom we spoke in Qamanittuaq, it was John who came right out and said how much the community valued the type of knowledge we were collecting and why collaborative research was a good thing. It was this aspect of the work that made the oral history portion of the research in Qamanittuaq refreshingly different from similar effort in Lutsel K'e. Why this might be the case is anyone's guess—perhaps cultural differences (maybe even echos of the same polite deference to outsiders we'd spoken about with respect to the Sanctuary), or one might attribute the difference in attitude toward southern researchers to the fact that the Inuit at the time were much farther along in their land claim negotiations with the federal government and, in a sense, with more the agreements hammered out, had less to lose from telling outsiders about their views of land. We spoke in English:

> The Thelon River as far as the border of the game Sanctuary goes, is hunted and fished every year by the people of Baker Lake. Once you go beyond the game Sanctuary—because you can't catch or can't hunt in the game Sanctuary—I think one of the benefits that the people get for having a game Sanctuary on the Thelon River is the fact that there's always game there. There's all kinds of game put in the Sanctuary. But they don't always stay there. The game—like caribou and muskox—and there's crayfish there and everything—fish—over the years they grow in numbers and they eventually start to—you know, they're always moving and always travelling. If there's a section there where people or hunters can't hunt wildlife, it's an opportunity for the wildlife to grow in numbers, and yet they're always moving back and forth. People still have an opportunity to hunt them outside the game Sanctuary. There is a great benefit to the people of Baker Lake, both within the game Sanctuary itself and outside, and I think the more beneficial thing for the people of Baker Lake is outside the game Sanctuary, but it does have a lot of benefit to the community as well to have a Sanctuary the size of the Thelon Game Sanctuary itself. Years ago, after the game Sanctuary was established, I understand, talking to some of the elders in the community, that in the thirties, even into the forties, people were not aware of the fact that the game Sanctuary had been established. And therefore people would always live in that area and beyond. If I recall correctly, it's my understanding that most people were not advised of the establishment of the game Sanctuary until the

late forties or early fifties. And therefore people were always hunting and living in that area. I guess, until probably the early fifties when people found out about the fact that there had been a game Sanctuary established in that area. But until people were aware of that fact, people have always lived there. I've been up there myself and I can pinpoint a great number of old campsites up in the Thelon Game Sanctuary and beyond. But to my knowledge—at least, that's the kind of thing that I'm aware of.

I understand, in the early fifties, when the people were told about the Thelon Game Sanctuary, or about the fact that the Thelon Game Sanctuary had been established almost 20 years prior to that, that they either didn't understand it or didn't know why or for what reason it was established. But I think once people were given the proper explanation as to why it was established, then they respected the fact that you couldn't go into the Thelon Game Sanctuary to hunt caribou or whatever. But prior to that, I understand it took a long time for people to understand why it was established in the first place. Particularly in the fifties, because in the late fifties there was a—in '58 or '59—one of those years—we had a bad year when a lot of people starved in the Garry Lake area, and there were people, I understand, who were close to the Thelon Game Sanctuary, that lived in the area of course of the game Sanctuary, but would not go in there to hunt caribou or whatever they could find in there because of the fact that it had been established as a game Sanctuary. A number of families died because of the fact that they couldn't go in there to hunt game. Sad. That has happened. Some of the elders were talking about that, so I was aware of that.

In fact there are a number of families that are—there's a couple of people in the community now that used to live within that area who were told to move away from there. Basil Tuluktuk, was one that I'm aware of. He lived just up within—this side of the—the north side of Beverly Lake—and he was advised that he and his family would have to move away from there because of the fact that this has been established, and they shouldn't go hunting there any more. And there were campsites, I've seen the old campsites—there were a number of them there. We went up—we took that trip up with Dave Murray, and myself and Basil. Automatically, once we come to this point, Basil will know right away the boundaries of the game Sanctuary. Oh, yeah. Automatically. He knows the boundaries, exactly where it is.

When we were growing up, either your parents or your dad or your brother would tell you how to travel from one location to another. They would not always take you there to show you how to get there; it's all done by telling you which way you travel, which way you go, by being told. And you have to learn to picture that in your mind. Like, I may not have been there, but I could picture it in my mind from what I've been told. Once you can do that, you don't have any problem getting from place to another. I would tell you how to get there by—which road to take. You would have—you're going to have to travel in winter by dog team. And those teams are always, I'll show you which way to travel and how to get there. What particular lakes or hills to go for, and when. And once you learn to picture those in your mind, you won't have any problem getting there. Yeah. Like a—well, a short distance, say, from Baker Lake to Aberdeen Lake. Almost to the north end of Aberdeen Lake. When I first travelled that on my own, I had to travel it almost guessing, and yet trying to picture what I had been told a few years prior to that which way to travel. My first trip there was in winter—it was in early spring, March or April. I had to go by trying to recall back what I was told which way to travel in order to get to the north end of Robinson Lake. It wasn't easy. And yet I could make it to where I was going or to where I wanted to go. Going back, I was going back in a different direction, but trying to get on a particular route that I tried to recall back from what I had been told before. It was a good experience, but scary, because I was never sure I was going in the right direction.

Most of the marks were—because this was in the early spring, April and May—snowdrifts: the directions and conditions of snowdrifts. Those were the main markers that I had to go by. The major markers, I guess, were when I travelled from one distance to a 5 or 10 miles at a time, or Inuksiut, the major—they were the major markers that I had to recall. They were mainly described as to where they were located, not so much as how big they were or what shape they were in, but where they were located. It would have to be that I was—that I had to travel them in such an angle to make sure I was still going in the right direction. They were more of a directional marker than anything else. I guess the major markers were the inuksiut. I knew that once I got to one particular inuksiut that I would know where I was. Automatically, I would know where I was, and I would also automatically know which way to continue. I always tried to go without taking notes and maps to learn things in my mind. I think most of the things that I've learned in my time are I've always learned them in my mind rather than put them in writing. Or on a map. To myself, I found that more exciting and it gave me something that I could really learn. Anything that I have in writings or on a map is something I don't really find—I don't have—there's not a great deal of challenge there for me.

Land knowledge, I think, is more tied—more come out from stories than anything else. Like we talk—I said earlier that when I was growing up I had to learn to travel any distance. I learned a great deal of that by listening and by having to picture it in the back of my mind. A lot of knowledge—a lot of that is a great deal more of that than of anything else. Even today, it's still the same way, although I think now that a lot of the younger people I know have used maps if they were going to travel. Like, for instance, my older boys, two of my olders, if they want to go somewhere, and they want to know how to get to where they want to go, now I show them quickly on the map. If I try to tell them—to get them to picture it in their minds how to get there, I doubt very much that they'd do it, but if I show them on the map they can do it easily. So—land, knowledge is something that came out a great deal out of stories or being told about the land, more than anything else. For some of us, I guess, that have to grow up and learn to live on the land itself. I've always strongly believed that people my age, and some of the people who are older than me, that wouldn't have survived if they hadn't learned to live and to travel the land in order to survive. And if you want to survive, in the days when I was growing up, you had to learn to travel either by dog team or by other means of transportation. And yet to do it so that if I travel any distance during the day I don't get lost—because if I did get lost I was a goner, then, in those days—but in order to survive one had to travel. You were not always told what the land was like when you were travelling. I usually get up at four or five in the morning and I want to go fishing at a certain spot, I had to get there by myself, on my own, and then picture the areas I'd walk or travel by dogteam or whatever, and learn that by myself. In that way, one had—I always had to look out and to learn what the land and rivers and lakes were like, and if you didn't pay any particular attention to those, then you were, you never be a good hunter or a good fisherman, and you would not survive. So that's how important the land, rivers and lakes were, at least when I was growing up. And to a lot of us that had to learn to travel those areas to survive, it was very important then, and it's still very important to us today, because although many of us may have big and different areas around Baker Lake, there are still a lot of areas that we *haven't* been to, and that we haven't covered. And without the knowledge that we've had to learn from experience, we wouldn't bother to try and go on to some new areas. So in that sense, I think it was and still is very important, at least to those of us who had to learn with the land, rivers and lakes and so.

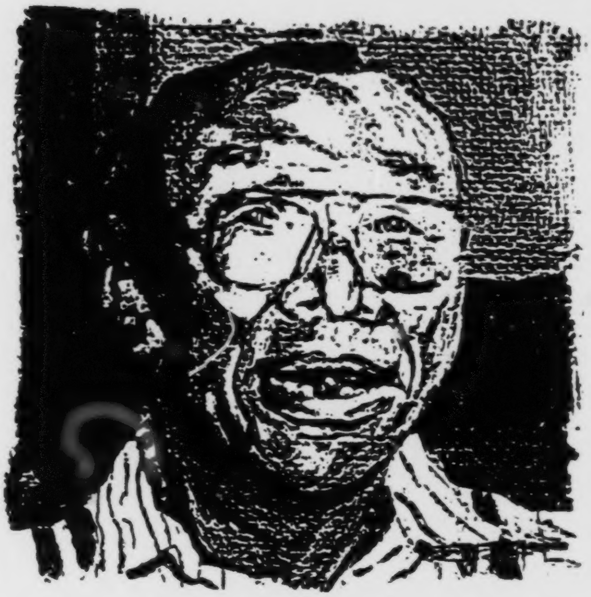
One of the major ways we always pick for the land or the river, whichever it happens to be, is the fact that, when you travel from one area to another, you come across a large summer camp, an old summer camp. In appreciation and respect for that particular area or that land that gave our ancestors a chance to survive in their days and their years, one thing that we never do is touch anything in those areas. You leave them as you see them or as you find them; that's one of the major ways of our people showing their respect for the land or the rivers or whatever the area where they happen to be. And I'm not aware—there may be other ways of showing respect for the land or the river, whichever it may happen to be, but that's the major way of *our* people showing respect for these areas.

I often wonder if, in fact, Christianity had any effect on the knowledge of the people about the land or rivers and lakes. Because, in my case, I find that once I have learned something by experience, and something that I have had to live true in order to learn, and how to survive on the land, or rivers or waters or lakes or whatever. Once I have had a bit of that knowledge, and the importance of that knowledge that I've been able to learn, it'll always be in my mind. At least in my case; personally, it didn't have any effect—it didn't have any impact to the fact that I've had to learn and have learned some knowledge about the land and the rivers and the lakes and so on. I often think that—I don't think Christianity, although it was important to the people, did have a great deal of impact on them—any one individual or groups or people. There—I guess there's always been some way or another you're always aware of the unseen. A lot of people like our ancestors—my father and my grandparents weren't—they were not aware of Christian people for a long time, until their later years. My dad, in later years my dad—I guess not until he was in his fifties at least was never aware of Christianity. My grandparents never almost—almost all of them were not aware of Christianity until they were fairly old. In their time and in their days, I know my father used to tell me that he was always aware of some power or something—an existence of something that was always there, that he couldn't explain what it was but he was aware of *something*—some kind of power that existed there that he could use in order for him to survive. And yet he was never aware of what it was until he had a contact with a priest of minister who explained to him, "Yes, there is a God." At least, that's the way that's the way that my dad used to explain it. There are probably different explanations from other people. That's the way that my dad used to explain it. Like, my dad used to tell me it took a long time for him to learn the difference between what he knew or what he had thought he knew or felt from the explanation that he got from the missionary. It took a while for him to put the two and two together. And yet, like, when he was a very old man, just a few years before he passed away, he used to sit there and tell me, you know, "I had to learn to put these two and two together and yet still be aware of the fact that I knew about these things before they were explained to me. But I had to learn to put the two and two together in order to understand what they were or what it was."

One of the things about, that I learned over the years is when I spent time talking to people in the community. They'll agree to do an interview when it's all in Inuktitut or with an interpreter or whatever. The only time these people will agree to do that is when they feel comfortable that what they say is going to have some use for the community or for their grandchildren or whatever the case may be. And so far I always have mentioned that there's nothing wrong with using what they've just told you, for whatever purpose—whether it be made into a book or otherwise. And people say, "Go ahead and use it." The only people that may get offended by some material is someone who is not aware of all these things. Now, I'm referring to a young man, maybe he's sixteen, who reads this book about Baker Lake, or reads a book about someone being interviewed about the land, in particular. They may not agree with that because for the same reason they haven't been through that experience. But anybody else you can deal with will certainly be more than happy to have something like that. One of the things that one must learn and remember when going into a community like Baker Lake, or any of the other communities, and talking to different people—once somebody liked Barnabus agreed to tell stories or tell about his bad experience, he'll go through and tell you everything—oh, I guess, pretty well everything he's gone through— and, having done that, he knew that what he had said maybe you will put in a magazine or something like that in the future. And once a person agrees to tell you something about their life or their experience, they're basically just saying "Use whatever you want to use from that in that section." There are certain things, there are certain things that people, some Inuit people, don't talk about or talk about very rarely about their life experiences. In those cases, an individual will tell you, you know, "I've gone through this—I've done this—or I have gone through this experience, but I prefer to keep it between ourselves." They'll always indicate to you these things, though—let you know there's no problem in putting something like this into a magazine, or whether—

And I think people are always more than happy to give their time to something like this. People are not always willing to give their time for other things, but I think that when there's something that's going to be done for the benefit of the community, then people are always happy to give a helping hand if they can.

Silas Putumiraqtuq



On John Pudnak's advice, we went to chat with Silas Putumiraqtuq at his house in Baker Lake. Although John knew that Silas was more associated with the Back River and north of there, than with the Thelon River, John thought that Silas would have spent time on the Thelon and would have some things to say about it. At 62, Silas is the father of Hattie Mannik, the woman who is in charge of the Baker Lake oral history project. The whole family now lives in Baker lake, having moved to town in the late 50s or early 60s. We spoke about many topics during the course of the interview. One of the ironies of this encounter, however, was that after we had spent some time talking about drum dancing, a drum dancer came on the television, as if to illustrate what Silas was talking about.

Silas gave a good feel for how much of an imposition the Sanctuary was for the Caribou Inuit, and this from first-hand knowledge of the hardships. But the most important of Silas's gifts to this research was his articulation of the importance of being *dependent* on land for one's survival and how this situation breeds a kind of knowledge that cannot be achieved through other means. He spoke of drum dancing of notions of spirituality involving the sky, air, water and land, and of collective ownership of land, and all of these ideas were set in the context of people and a life that was integrated with the landscape. It was through Silas that

I came to understand that there is a funadmental difference between a person who travels on the land independently—for sport or recreation—and a person who travels on the land dependent on what it can provide for food, clothing and shelter. I was especially interested in his comments about "two cultures" and how the young Inuit of today will never know the land the way their parents or grandparents did because they are no longer dependent on it:

> I was aware of the existence of the Thelon Game Sanctuary because I was already old enough. I had gone beyond being a young man by the time the game Sanctuary was established, so I was aware of the establishment of it, although that area was one of the best muskox hunting areas, because my father and my family used to go up there to hunt muskox all the time. There were no other places where you could get muskox, and also because there was a family who used to live as far as the treeline, and they lived up there for a long time, even after the game Sanctuary was established. There was a camp with quite a few number of families that lived at camp right at the treeline up there. So I was aware of the establishment of the game Sanctuary. It was established when I was old enough to know by then.
>
> It was very difficult, especially for the families that used to, that had always lived within, inside the game Sanctuary before it was established. And then once the game Sanctuary was established, one of the hardest things for those families was, first of all they had to move away from the Thelon Game Sanctuary, but one of the most difficult things for those families was that this area, the area within the game Sanctuary and beyond, up to and as far as the treeline, was one of the best trapping areas in those years, and it was very difficult for people who had lived up there all the time that they had to move away from there once the game Sanctuary was established.
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> The only thing that I could recall that had been told to him by my parents came from their great-great—probably their great-great-grandparents—any years ago. It was the fact that their great grandparents used to travel farther west than they did—than my parents and I did. They used to travel quite a long distance to the far west and into the bush country. There's been something of that nature that my parents used to talk about, but because I was a child and a young man, I never did pay much attention to those stories. But they used to mention about their grandparents, their great-grandparents travelling with them far west into the bush country.
>
> The time when my father died, I was still fairly—he wasn't all that old, and I was still a good hunter and everything. And I never knew about it until much later years, until just very recently, I suppose—ten or fifteen years ago—I guess what had happened to him was that he had a heart attack. Because I could recall very clearly—they were having a drum dance one evening, and just after he danced and

sat down on the bed, and he just leaned over and that was that. He must have had a heart attack. But he was a good hunter at the time.

Perhaps one of the best things about those drum dances in the earlier years was that, often people would sometimes come into the camp from other communities and other camps. Come by, and passing through, they would spend the night there and there would be a drum dance that night. It wasn't that often, but certainly any time some newcomers come in or come by the camp, they used to have drum dances. Partly because winter nights are fairly long up here, and it was more of an entertainment type for the people who were in the camp by themselves, and certainly they would entertain other people who came in to spend the night with them. It was always the tradition of the Inuit people even many, many years back—a long time ago—that any time new people arrive in the camp—they may be passing through or they may be coming to be with them for a short period of time—that was always the tradition or a cultural thing that any group of people—different groups of people or different tribes—the Inuit people and they would always have drum times on those special occasions. When you were growing up as a child, one has to learn everything that has been taught to you. And one of them is you have to learn how to play drums at a very early age. In fact, maybe your father or your uncle or someone would hold the drum, and you'd learn to hold it. They'd teach you how to hold the drum and to play. Even a small child had to learn to play that. It's all part of the Inuit culture. Anything that their parents and their ancestors had learned, you had to learn all that.

One of the things that's missing now, today, living in a community like this one with all the people in the community, what we used to have in our camps—we talked about earlier that, even as a small child or a young boy, you had to learn how to play drums, how to be a drummer, how to play the drums. They teach you—even they teach you that. Today, there's quite a few—there's still quite a number of elderly people in the community. One of the things that doesn't occur any more is those drum dances. There may be some on special occasions, maybe once in a long while, but certainly not often enough, where something like this is not being passed on to the young people any more, to the Inuit children or some of the young people in the community. That's one of the things that's been missing now, although the older people in the community do have a chance to get together, and they're trying to organize things for the elderly people in the community, which is something that can certainly be useful. But there are often things that are missing now, compared to the years when you were growing up as a small child. Some of the things that were taught to you are not being taught today, now.

You find yourself in almost two kinds of cultures: the time when you were growing up as a child and the time you spent, all those years, travelling and living off the land and being able to survive on the land, and then getting back once the time changed when people started living in a community like Baker Lake here, and the younger people don't have the same experience and the same knowledge that we had. And yet the older generation, the elderly people in the community, pretty much have the same idea about why the land is important to them, and possibly one of the universal ideas and the knowledge is that the land has been able to provide for them, has been able to provide for their parents, for their grandparents, and certainly for themselves.

For a person of my age, having gone through so much, and having gone through some good times, bad times, and then being one who is thankful for being alive today, because of the hard time that one learned to survive on the land. And yet changes have an impact on any society, possibly; it doesn't matter if it's our people or somebody else—other cultural or other societies—changes always certainly have an impact on any groups of people. But one of the things that we have always been taught as a child is to leave the land as it is, and that means not to do any damage to the land. That means not to use the land for—just for developments which may destroy the land or the animals or the fish in the lake. Hearing these things may happen in some time in the future is very difficult to accept, and yet eventually are going to occur anyway. But, hopefully, changes that are going to be occurring in the future will take place gradually, and certainly not—gradually, by having all the people on the committee who I know are very concerned about the changes that are taking place and are always taking place.

One of the things that the Inuit people have always been taught when they're growing, certainly at a young age, is that, in order to leave the land as it is means that you have to—because you always use the land for different purposes for each generation to hunt and to trap and to fish, and these things that you do—to use an example, if you're hunting and you kill a caribou, you don't always take the caribou as a whole. There are some parts that are useless, and therefore you have to leave them on the land. But you don't just leave them there; you cover them up properly and leave them there. And that's one of the things that has always been taught to them when they were growing up. And in a way your leaving what has been given to you as it is, but also giving back to the land for that land being able to provide for you. One of the things that, like, your parents would teach you that if you were going to leave something on the land you'd leave it properly. And that's a symbol of being able to give back to the land. Not just leaving it there because you don't need it, you don't need it or you have no use for it, or you can't use it at the time you leave it on the land. That's not—simply because of that, partly it has a great deal more to do with the fact of you also giving back to the land something that you, yourself, are not going to use. Some parts you wanted the—one of the parts, some of the parts that you want, doesn't always use or doesn't need is usually the inside of a caribou. Lungs, stomach, that—those parts. Because you don't always use them or you don't always need them, those parts, that if you want to leave them on the land, you don't just leave them, you put them away properly. You may cover them up or—how—it depends on what area you happen to be in. Some part of the land is sandy, or some part of the land is rockier than others. And yet you always try to put them away and cover them up properly if you're going to leave them on the land.

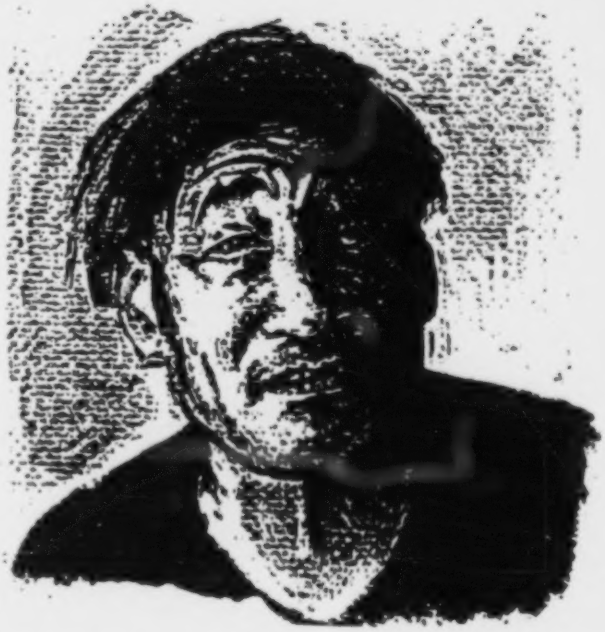
Perhaps one of the best ways to try to explain the Inuit view of the way of how one feels about the land and how one feels about owning the land or a piece of land. Just to use an example—the lot where my house is sitting here now, I couldn't call that my land because I would feel rather stupid if I called it *my* land—the lot that my house is sitting on now. When Inuks say, "Our land," or "My land," they're referring to the whole, almost unlimited distance. But that view of an Inuk, when they're looking at our land, or when they say "My land," or "Our land," they're looking at a very large area, or you're looking at a large area of land, not just referring to the lot where the house is on. That, perhaps, is one of the differences.

One of the things that, as a child growing up, your parents would always teach you different things. Certainly, one of the things was how to survive and how to be able to provide for yourself and your family in the future. One of the other things that parents used to teach and used to tell you is that there was some kind of an existing—some kind of being that existed in the sky, in the air, in the water and on the land. And one of the things that our parents and grandparents never did mention to us what were these beings—what they were, or how they happened to be there, and if they had names. But they were aware of the fact that there was some One or some Being who would be responsible for the land, the water, and the air and the sky. Our parents always used to say, and especially the grandparents used to say, is that there are some kind of forms or physical—or spiritual—being that were there on the land, in the water, in the sky or in the air. But they didn't have names because they were not aware of—maybe because they didn't know how to name them or because they were not aware of names for these things. But they were something that was always there, that their grandparents were aware of, and their parents were aware of. Perhaps one of the things that could be used or be interpreted into a kind of worship, if that's what you want to call it, because our grandparents and our parents taught us that there were some form or some being on the land, in the water and in the air or the sky. They also used to always make sure that we respect those; even though we can't see them, we were taught to respect. That's one of the reasons why people respect the land so much—the air and the water and the sky, is the fact that there were some beings beyond what you could see. And because of that reason we were always taught to respect those beings, or to respect the land as we see it. But certainly to respect the unknown or the unseen. And perhaps that was one way of being able to worship something that was unseen and yet known to be there.

One of the greatest differences between what the young people are being able to do, or are doing or learning, compared to what we had to learn and what we had to do, and what the eldest children do today is, in order for us to be able to respect the land that is given to us for our survival, we had to try and leave the land undisturbed as much as possible. It's something today a lot of the young people don't seem to care about any more; they go out there and they hunt what they want, or they go out there to hunt caribou, and they will leave things sitting out on the land, rather than putting them away properly like we had to do it. They, although they may, in their own way, in their own minds, still feel they respect the land or have respect for it. Certainly not in the way that we have had to have respect for the land. Perhaps the only other thing that comes to mind quickly is that, although I have explained it in more detail, is why the land is so important to Inuk. Certainly in our generation it was, because we were taught to respect the land and make sure that we don't disturb it when there's no need to disturb it. And yet because—a lot of that has to do with one being able to learn from it and respect it at the same time. And that is that, when you're travelling on the land, and it doesn't matter where you happen to be travelling, or what distance, or what direction you happen to be travelling, you're always travelling the land and yet learning something new. There's always something new there, all the time. It doesn't matter where you go or what direction you travel. Because there's always something new. It makes— one was always taught to respect the land because there's always something there that the land has to offer. Maybe that—again, maybe it's something I've always mentioned before—but that's one of the things that I may have missed out when I talked to you about why we respect the land and why we want to keep the land as it is, so much. Certainly, that's one of the things that has occurred because people don't have to travel by dog team any more. It may be one of the reasons why people may seem to have less respect now than those people who have spent time travelling a lot.

One of the things that our parents used to do, and even I was doing in my time, is whenever we needed wood for a purpose, for a dog team or something, for a sled—certainly for sleds—is go into the treeline. The tree country. Or you could go to get a lot of wood from Beverly Lake there, because there's all kinds of driftwood there. If you needed wood, that's where one went to get wood then. That's one of the reasons why they respect the land, for what it's been able to provide to them in the way of wood, in the way of animals and games. Because the land has been able to provide for them so they could survive—in many different areas, in many different ways. One of the useful purposes of having a lot of that driftwood—and the Beverly Lake area had a lot of purpose for it—a lot of that wood was used for tent frames, kayak frames and sleds. There was always a lot of ways of using that driftwood, and so people used to go in there any time they needed wood for anything for any purposes. They would go in there and get all the driftwood they could get. One of the things, in those years, that was very helpful to the people who wanted to go out and get some wood or driftwood, was to go into Beverly Lake, simply because one must always remember that in those years people didn't have all kinds of tools where they could go into the treeline and cut trees. They didn't have saws or even axes, so you could depend on the wood that had drifted into the Beverly Lake. So that was one of the favourite spots for people going out to get wood whenever they needed it, into Beverly Lake. There really wasn't any need for people to go up the river or into the river to find what they needed in the way of wood. The majority of people would go into the Beverly Lake area if they wanted wood, simply because the driftwood was there, and because a lot of the people didn't even have saws to go in to cut trees. One of the purposes and one of the meanings of the name of Beverly in Inuktitut is "The Lake of Driftwood." There's so much driftwood on the south side of the lake all the time, that name happened to become very handy, I guess. It was given the name—it was given a long, long time ago, so the name, the purpose of it, the reason for giving it that particular name was because of all the driftwood that's available there.

Thomas Qaqimat



Baker Lake elder Thomas Qaqimat lived a large portion of his life in or near the Thelon Game Sanctuary. He was born in the Beverly Lake area in 1929 and remembers spending many summers along the Thelon River, inside the borders of the Sanctuary. He told me of boating up the river in a 20- or 22-foot boat, like a pointer or whaler, hunting caribou at summer crossings, and being with his father hunting muskox—lots of muskox, he said.

Thomas's story is central to this research because it is the tale of a man who grew up along the Thelon River. His mind pictures are of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. He speaks of the sensitivity of caribou to garbage from the hunt, and how leaving this around might make the caribou difficult to find the next year. His was a tale of the survival of a person whose life had been directly affected by the establishment of the Sanctuary. Although previous inquiries about land use in the Thelon region have, for political purposes, showed activity (both Dene and Inuit) stopping at the border of the Sanctuary, it was through Thomas's commentary that I was able to see a pattern of unspoken use by both groups of people. The native people who used the Thelon knew, better than anyone, that policing the Sanctuary was very difficult. Thomas was one of many people who tried to cooperate and to reason with the authorities, but who, in the end, did pretty much as he pleased inside the Sanctuary.

Perhaps the most compelling parts of Thomas's testimony were his stories about learning on the land—what he learned, and how and from whom he learned it. In the particulars of what he said were universal truths that made me smile. This gem, for example: "Parents are the worst people in the world. They get you up early in the morning to teach you to survive." This statement, along with the rest of what Thomas said, made him a delightful consultant. Other excerpts from our conversation follow:

> Summer camps were very beautiful. There was lots of caribou coming through in the summer. They would be going west, coming from the south every summer. One of the main things when you're spending time in summer camps, especially if it's very hot, meat tends to spoil very quickly, so you only take what you can use. In order to take what you need, you also have to prepare the meat so that it doesn't go bad. So that keeps you going all the time. You didn't have to hunt every day of the week, but you take what you need and that would last you for the summer. And yet you have to keep working on it to make sure the meat doesn't spoil.
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> My favourite place is the place where I was born. Once, after my parents passed away, this is where I was until I moved into the community. Other favourite locations were summer camps.
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> Automatically, I can picture everything in that area, everything altogether, every little detail. To use an example, there is a place on the river where there is fast water. There used to be a big summer camp there, right along the river. That's something I can picture very clearly. Yes, it's an old summer camp. You can see old tent rings up there. Those tents were very large. Big round tent rings. You could picture the land, detail by detail, whether there are swamp areas. You would know exactly where they are. You could picture everything by detail. The land as a whole and the land in detail. My grandson, by contrast, will only picture what he sees in the community, not the land as a whole or in detail. Maybe the school where they went to, or the teachers maybe, that sort of thing. One of my older sons always talks about the teachers he had in school. He can picture land and animals and wildlife because that's what he learned as a child growing up. Someone who grew up and went to school pictures the things that were learned in school. I find that you can't be an Inuk and not be able to picture the land in detail because you don't have anything else you grew up with that can take its place. You always picture the land in detail, because there is really nothing else that comes to mind.

First thing you do when you catch a caribou, you have to cut it up in order to dry the meat. In order to preserve the meat, you have to keep it covered so that it is cool all the time. You don't keep them out in the hot sun all the time. Before you cut them up, before drying them. Nothing is wasted. All parts of the caribou is used. It's got to be cut and prepared the right way, because if you don't prepare them the right way, then they tend to spoil and become useless or only good for dog food. Everything from the caribou was used. Nothing was wasted. One of the things that one must remember, is that if caribou come close to the camp, you don't put anything in those areas because they may not come back the same way as they did the previous year or the following year. The leftovers, or the parts of the caribou that you don't need, you gather them and you put them all in one area, rather than just leaving them scattered all over the place. You make sure that you put them away properly. When you have to live with game, such as caribou, they're very sensitive and they're very smart. To use an example: a small group of caribou may come nearby a camp. Automatically they will know which way the other herd has gone just by when you get to the trail they can smell them. They would also know the difference between the trail of their fellow caribou and a human trail, just by smell. You may not be there, but they will know you have been there. Having worked with different wildlife over the years, I have learned that each different animal—fox, caribou—they have their own way of finding out different things, or knowing that there is someone close by, automatically. How they do that, I'm not aware. But each different animals have their own way to tell that someone has been around.

We first heard about the Sanctuary in the early days, when I was still a young man. But in the early days, the boundary of the Thelon Game Sanctuary was way back over here before, and then in the 50s they moved the boundary away over here again. We were aware of it at the time, but because it was way out here at the beginning, it didn't affect our camp or anything. And then when the boundary was redesigned in the 50s, we were aware of that fact. I think it was 1955 that we were first aware of the boundary change. In the year 1955 we were living down on the south end of Mallory Lake. The RCMP came over to our camp, because they used to come to do certain things, that year I think they came to go wolf hunting in the winter of 1955. That was also the time they explained the boundary had moved closer. I was going to go wolf hunting but I knew then that I could only go so far. I couldn't go into the game Sanctuary to hunt. That's when I heard about the extension of the Sanctuary. There were a number of fellows who were wolf hunting that year, using big bear traps. Although I would have gone in beyond the boundary in previous years, it was explained to me that year, the point was made to me that year, so I didn't go into the Sanctuary to go wolf hunting. That's when I first heard about the extension of the Sanctuary.

It was very difficult at the beginning, for a while. It was something that one had to get used to. However, in the later years, because I was still travelling in this area a lot, I did request permission to trap beyond the game Sanctuary. In those days, any request that you made, with no government agents or anything like that, you had to make your request to the RCMP, because they were only ones that had the knowledge of all the regulations. In turn the RCMP had to make a request to the Canadian wildlife people in Ottawa. When I made this request, because in those days travelling did not happen on a daily basis, it took a long time for information to get through. If you were living here, it might take half a year for word to get to the community and back about what happened to your request. I made that request because that was one of the best trapping areas around there, for fox. That's why I made the request. When I finally got a response to that request, the request could not be approved in particular, but they made it clear to me that it did not make all that much difference to them if I did go in there, because I had to make a living from trapping. Although I was not permitted, as a hunter, a person who had to make a living off the land, they made it clear that they would kind of turn the other way. He could go in and trap to make a living. That was the only way to make a living in those days. I was not requesting permission to go in an hunt muskoxen or caribou or to fish or anything, I wanted to trap foxes. I guess the response was that although I wasn't supposed to trap in there, it didn't really matter if I did, to make a living.

One of the major things that was made clear to the people was that once the boundary was made clear in the 50s was that you could not hunt big game, caribou, muskox, that sort of thing. Again, I made it clear when I made my request that I just wanted to trap fox, because it was good trapping there. It was also the area that was used by my parents and my grand parents, and it was one of the best trapping areas anywhere. Yes, I went in and trapped, although there was a representative of the Canadian Wildlife Service, from Ottawa, who was doing research on foxes that year. I know the guy. It was in the early 60s. I told him the same thing that I told the RCMP that I had to make a living somehow, and that I needed to do trapping. So they went ahead and let me do that. They didn't have any problem with me trapping inside the game Sanctuary.

The main landmarks travelling in the winter, either by yourself or with a group, are the snowdrifts, because the always come from the northwest. They are always in one direction. You could never get lost as long as there are snowdrifts. In the later years, we used to travel with white people from the community. There was one fellow there who used to work with MOT. He wanted to come out and travel with them for the weekend to this lake here. That particular day it was pretty stormy. You couldn't see your first two dogs because it was snowing so much. He wanted to know how we got from there to there without getting lost. But that's the way it was. If you done this all your life, you know. But the dogs knew the way even better than we did. Once we got to camp that evening, that fellow wanted to know how we got from one where we started to where we got to, how we made it.. The simplest explanation is that as long as you know which way the snowdrifts are going, you always know where you're going and where you are. Snowdrifts were more like a watch, that would tell you where you are, how far you have gone and which way you are going. There is not only one kind of snowdrift. Wind from the northwest makes good fair sized snowdrifts. But there are also snowdrifts formed by winds that blow from other directions. The difference between those snowdrifts is the fact that you use, when you're travelling, the landmark snowdrifts, the ones that are facing northwest, south. They're the hard ones. They become very hard snow. Snowdrifts formed by winds running in other directions are usually very soft. When you're travelling by dogs, you have to remember that there are not always snowdrifts in all the land itself and therefore a great number of times you have to rely on your lead dog. He will be the one who leads the way. If you get lost, he or she will know the way back to camp or the place you want to go. Dogs are a lot smarter than most people think they are. Because when you're trapping in the winter, sometimes your traps are covered with snow and you can't find them. Well, the dog will automatically know where they are. They will smell them out. You could always picture that in the back of your mind. You always know what the land looks like. You're always homesick, in a way.

What you learn from the land has to do with different game, trapping foxes, other wildlife, maybe big game hunting. In order for one to get those, in order for one to survive, you had to learn those lessons from being on the land itself. You couldn't learn them otherwise. You had to learn them by observing the land itself. It is a lot of work, because if you are going to live off the land and provide for yourself and your family with game from the land, if you didn't pay attention to the land and your surroundings, you were not aware of different routes that different animals take, if you didn't learn those, you would not survive. So therefore you had to know the land very well and you had to be able to tell where you are in any location. Unless you knew all this you would not survive at all.

Of course, one of the major learning experiences, when you are a young man and you start to travel the land itself, naturally you have to learn to travel from one area to another, from your parents, from your dad. And yet at the same time, a lot of the experience, a lot of the knowledge, you have to be able to learn that by yourself by being able to try to do them on your own. But unfortunately you didn't really get to know the land in that way until later years, when your parents passed away and you're on your own, then you find yourself in a position where you have to learn to do all this.

When you're a young man, your parents are always teaching you something or telling you something about the land or about the game. When you're a young man, you don't pay that much attention (laughing). Unfortunately once you have to be on your own, it hits you pretty hard when you have to learn to survive in your own. All these things start to come back afterwards. Parents are the worst people in the world. They get you up early in the morning to teach you to survive. As a young man, like most young men, I had to survive on my own with my parents, but unfortunately it didn't work out that way. When my parents passed away I had three dogs. I was not capable of handling more dogs than that. Just remembering what your parents, you start to do things by memory. At the beginning it is very difficult. You don't know if you are going to survive or not. Things never work our perfectly. You learn from your mistakes. And as you get older as the years go by, you start to do things better and you start to do things the way you had been taught to do them. But that doesn't happen automatically. It takes a few years.

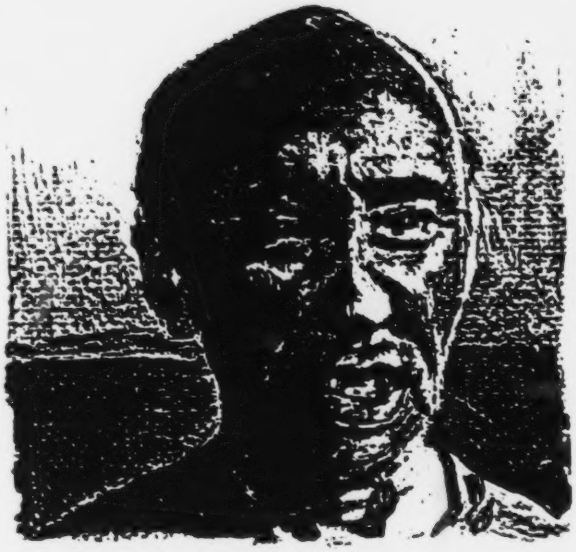
Of course one of the things you remember is your parents as teachers, but other people, other old people teach you things too. If an old person came to our camp and knew that there was something I didn't know, then he might sit down and teach you about that because you didn't know about that. Teaching came from your parents, but it also came from other people.

I first learned to run a dog team with four dogs, in this area here. When you're first learning to run dogs, they would take you a short distance away from camp, may be a quarter of a mile or so. But once they turn around, they run like hell (he laughs). That's learning.

I don't know how old I was then, but I had to be a very young child. I used to cry when things didn't work out. One of the most difficult things to learn about running dogs is that when they give you just four dogs, they give you the four worst dogs, and then you're expected to race. But one of the problems of this is that once you learn to run your dog team properly, no one wants to race you any more. That is frustrating. That's a story about the process of learning. Eventually I got to be a very good dog driver. Everyone used to come into the community at Christmas and at Easter and New Year's. I used to win all the dog races. People would come from all directions. They would have different ways of doing things and they would have different ways of talking and you would always learn something from that. They always in turn learn something from you. Those special days were very short because you always had to get back to your camp to start trapping again. After the trapping season is all over, it is easier to spend time with other people.

One of the things that comes to mind quickly are the hard times, the difficult times, the difficult years, those come to mind very quickly. There was no game in some years, that's the hardest thing for families, because you depend on game. You didn't get social assistance or welfare in those days. If there was no game it was very difficult. The Sanctuary was already established when I was born. It wasn't until much later years that we were made aware that it exists. And even when it had been established, we were still able to hunt in there. It didn't make all that much difference. It didn't affect us in any way. Because if my parents or ancestors had known about that, they would have respected it. They weren't aware of it until much later years. It didn't make all that much difference. It's the same today. You had good years and you had bad years. You had to make do. That was the only way of surviving. If it was going to be a good year you had plenty. If not, you were hungry. You take it as it comes.

James Ukpajaq



During the summer of 1988, there were great community celebrations and cultural exchanges between members of the international archaeological expedition, of which I was a part, and the local people of Baker Lake. One of the stars of these festivities was a lively 72-year-old drum dancer called James Ukpajaq. In the summer of 1991, when John and I caught up with him in his home in Baker Lake, James had just returned from Scotland as a member of a Canadian delegation touring Europe. He'd been drum dancing to bag pipe music! It was a delight to see James again and to hear him speak about the land.

James was born near Chesterfield Inlet in 1915 or 1916 and remembers hearing about the Thelon Game Sanctuary when it was formed in 1927. He also recalls his father heading out that way to hunt muskoxen, and his family moving out to Beverly Lake for three winters and three summers. We began speaking about the role of the Baker Lake Elder's Committee, and went on to drum dancing, mind pictures and the future disposition of the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

James's main contribution to this research was his conceptualization of the role that drum dances have taken in the formulation and transmission of mind pictures related to land and land activities. He helped me see that the amalgam of place names, stories, images, and personal experience with surviving on the land—this mixture is much more than the sum of its component parts. In a sense, through James, I came to see the drum dance as a symbol of integration in Inuit conceptions of land. Getting from A to B or learning how to hunt or to perform any of the land-related skills are all pragmatic and necessary elements of what it takes to survive on the barrens;however, the way in which James presented his comments about the drum dance allowed me to see that the experience on the land also necessarily involves a celebration of the oneness of living on the land and the integration of all of these skills and different ways of knowing. Excerpts from his teachings follow:

> Although the elders committee, the elders group in the community, are always concerned with things that are happening in the community, anything things that are going to happen in the community, there is always a number of ideas that are being talked about—things that are going to happen next year or the year after. Sometimes it is quite difficult to say how they feel unless they have the whole details as to what might happen if something is going to happen. We normally don't make any recommendations unless we are sure about what might be best for the future of the community. That's the only reason we exist today, because the elders years ago used to make decisions and provide for the younger generation.
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> Recalling back to when I was a young man, to my recollection, to this day, the land—not necessarily the Thelon Game Sanctuary—but the land as a whole was always very important to the people. And people have always lived far west of Baker Lake, toward the Thelon Game Sanctuary and beyond. Even as a child, I can recall a large number of families living in camps in that area, in both winters and summers. People would not live in those areas if the land was not able to provide for them, if there was not game. It probably would not have meaning for them, but because it has been able to provide for them to survive, it has become important to them.
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> When my dad was a young man, he used to hunt muskox for trading purposes because muskox hides were very valuable. I first recall hearing about the Thelon Game Sanctuary being established, at the time that it was established, but I'm not sure when that was. I was still pretty much of a child then, but I still remember. It did have impact in two different ways. One major impact was on the people who always lived in the Beverly Lake area. My family, my grandparents, my parents, who had always lived in that area because that was the land where they survived and had to make their living on the land. It had impact on that group of people. It also had an impact on people who lived in the Kazan area, because they used to go up there to hunt muskox. When the Sanctuary was established, they were not able to go there to hunt muskoxen. That's the only place where you could get muskoxen in those

years. Insofar as other people who lived in the area, around Baker Lake or in the area east of Baker Lake, it didn't really have that much impact. It did have impact on other areas. At first, it was very difficult for people to recognize that this has been established and therefore you can't hunt beyond a certain point, beyond the boundary. A lot of people who lived close to the boundary, or within the boundary itself, in the early years didn't like the establishment of that. Unfortunately, again, people were not notified as to the establishment of the Thelon Game Sanctuary until much later years. For my part, insofar as my travels have taken me west, in my time, I have travelled below the treeline with my parents, with my mom and dad, away beyond the treeline. I went with them as a child, but I don't recall that.

The only way of learning to travel from one place to another is you learned to do it by picturing what the land was like, or what the land was going to be like. There were no maps. For instance, one time my dad told me we were going from our camp to somebody else's camp, and I'd never been there before. I hadn't any idea where it was. He told me how to get there by giving me directions, locations of maybe lakes, or rivers, or hills, different shapes. He would tell me that if you travel to this lake, then you turn in this direction and then you turn the other way, and then you get there. You have to learn to picture what you're being told, how to get there, in your mind. Once you start off, everything will be exactly the way he said it would be, if you follow the right directions. You have to learn it exactly. If you don't have a good memory, if you don't pay attention to the instructions you're given, you'll never learn. That was the only way to learn.

Of course getting lost is one of the most exciting and difficult things to do. You're travelling by just the instructions you've been given. You have to picture the land as you travel because you haven't travelled it before. Sometimes you might miss a point, and if you do you get lost, but you go back to where you last recognized where you were, and try again. Unless you try to learn to do that, you could probably get lost forever. But you do get lost sometimes, but you always get back on the trail that you were supposed to follow, because of all the instructions you were given. Because now, all the instructions you were given are in the back of your mind so you would be able to recognize these different land marks—these river and lakes and hills—even if you haven't seen them before. But you should be able to recognize them now by what you have been told.

One of the major landmarks, travelling by dog team in the winter, is the snowdrift. Automatically, the number one landmark, no matter where you go, no matter what direction you are travelling. If the instructions are that you travel along the snowdrifts to the northwest, one of the smallest landmarks may be a small piece of rock on the shore of a little lake. If you can find that, then you know where you are. But sometimes landmarks don't have to be big marks. They can be very small. But again, if you can picture them, and recognize them once you get there, then you know where you are.

Once again, you didn't have maps to travel by. You had to learn to travel a great deal of the time on land unknown to yourself. You haven't been there before. The instructions given to you by your parents are the only map you have in the back of your mind. One of the major instructions you would be given are the wind directions—wind for the north, south, east, and west. That is one of the major things that one has to look out for, the wind directions. It doesn't matter if you're travelling in winter or in summer. Although there were no particular names for the wind directions. Naturally you would know when the wind shifts direction from one day to another. The major wind direction that one had to keep in mind at any given time was the northwest wind, for the simple reason that the northwest wind was the one that made the major landmark in this area, the snowdrift. The NW wind, if you happen to be travelling on the lake, could become pretty strong. That is one of the major wind directions for weather. It was one you had to watch out for. When one is good at taking directions, or good at picturing instructions that are given to you, you can travel any distance—long distance, say from here to Chesterfield Inlet. If you're good at it, you can travel any distance, long distance. One of the ways of telling that people have travelled these distances without maps, just by instructions, is the fact that people have travelled as far south as Churchill, Manitoba, and again, that was all done by using instructions. They may never have been there before. That's quite a long distance. And yet they were able to do that. You had to be good at that. You had to be able to remember instructions.

There are two parts to the drum dance performance: one, it is an instrument of entertainment. The songs are a different thing altogether. The songs that are sung when people dance with the drum are the ones that teach people the experiences of what the drummer had gone through. A song may tell the story about what happened to them in one location, or in one camp or something like that. It tells something about himself, or something about someone else. So the songs have more learning instructions in them than anything else. The drum itself is more an instrument to entertain people. One of the things about these different songs that they sing is this. Just to use one example, a song may be about someone who is a good hunter when they were growing up. And when you take the meaning of that song, and picture it what it was like for that person, it makes the person who is listening a better hunter than he may be today. So there is always the learning aspect of these song. Each song has different meanings. One song may be telling of an individual who has travelled to many areas, travelled long distances to many different areas throughout the region. People who might be listening may not have travelled as much. Some people don't travel much. Other people may travel a lot. Taking the meaning of that song, may be able to learn more about the land itself, so through the song you can travel to different areas. So there is a way of teaching people in the meanings of the songs. The songs either teach you something or make you want to learn more.

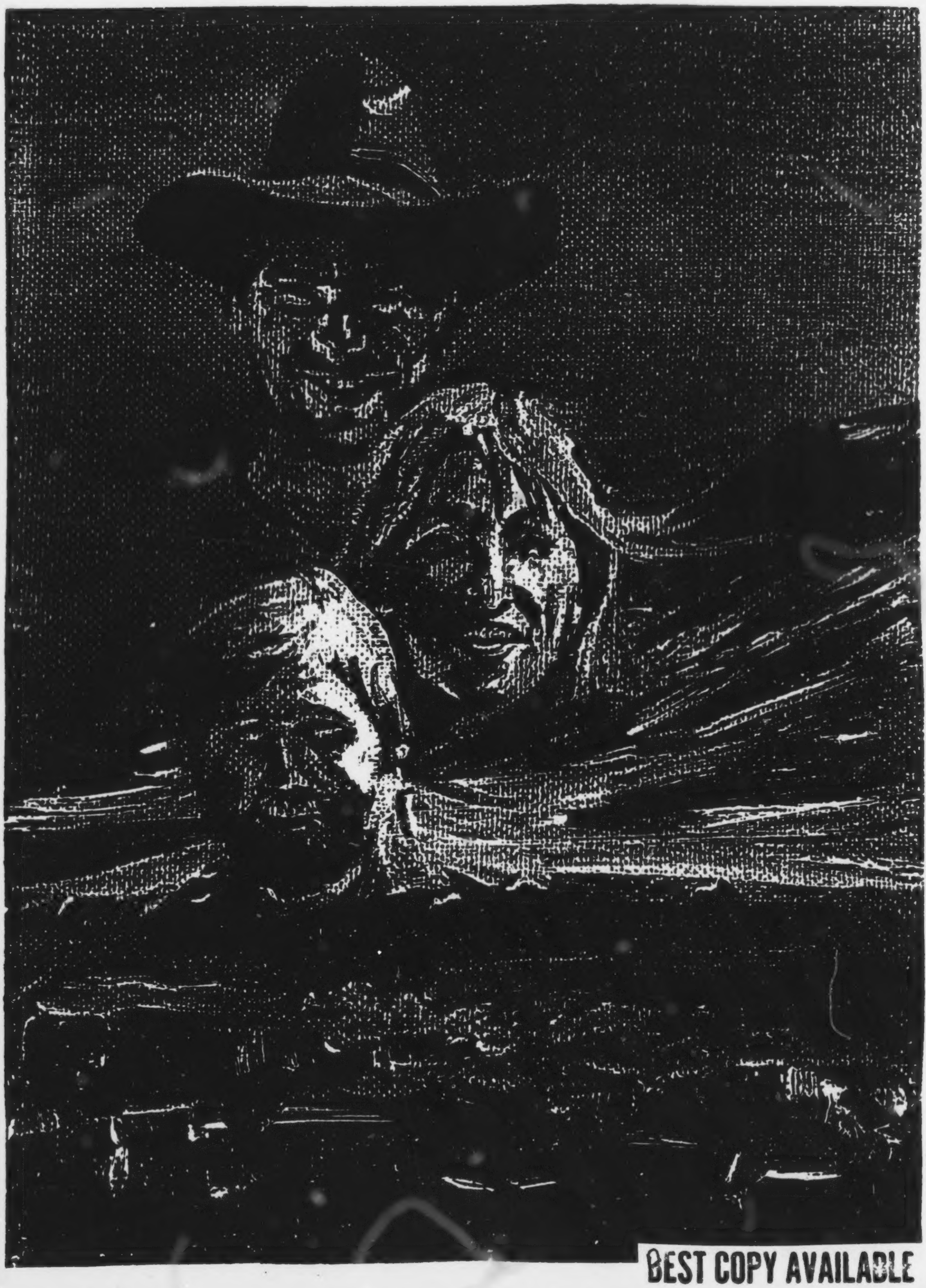
I guess one of the important things about the land itself is what it provides. Although the land is important because one had to survive and live on the land, the land must provide many game. And then it's not just the land itself, because the game is only in certain places at certain times. One area may have lots of caribou every year. Another may not. In order for one to be able to appreciate the land, greatly depends on what the land is able to provide for you. One thing that one must always learn to keep in mind is that at different seasons of the year, the game travels in different areas. Late fall may have a lot of caribou in one area. There may not be caribou there in winter. That is one of the reasons why the land itself is so important to the people, not because it is a good land, but that it provides for them. And not only one area, but as a whole, simply because the game is always moving.

Although it wasn't always easy to live on the land, to survive, sometimes you had to travel a long distance to survive for another winter or another summer, you may be lucky if you have a dog team to travel in winter. If you don't have a dog team and you want to travel to another place, you have to walk. And yet, the people themselves, looking back over the years, the land is important to you because it gives to you and allows you to survive and give back to the land. Simply because it provides for you, one has to be able to give back to that land in the way of perhaps leaving it as natural as possible, not destroying the land, or not damaging the land. When one can do that, that's one way of giving back for what it has provided for you. Perhaps one of the major things to help you understand this is to distinguish between a person who grew up in a city and a person who grew up on the land. One who grew up in the city may not have as much feeling for the land itself as one who have grown up on the land, who has been provided for by the land itself. For us, because we grew up on the land, preserving it is even more important now than it was when I was a younger man. My parents always said that we must not destroy the land because it has given so much to you. In return, leave it as it is. And therefore you will always be able to survive. Today that's still important to us in the community today. Because if the land can stay preserved as long as possible, it will always provide for your daughters and grand daughters, your sons and their great grandsons. In that way the land was important to us then, but it is also the way that the land is important to us now.

Large industrial development would harm the land, would destroy the land perhaps. That is the reason why we have to speak more about why the land is important to us. Different areas may have different names, but each of those groups of people have the same ideas about land. They have all been taught to preserve the land as much as possible. When one starts to look at the importance of the land, you look at the land as a whole, and not as different groups of people or different areas. The land is important as a whole, and not as sections. If you grew up a child in this environment, in this society, spent all your life living on this land and learning about it, one of the teachings you get from your parents is that all land—there may be different communities all over the territories, different communities, different languages, different dialects—and yet from the teaching you get from your parents, if the land you survive on is important to you, then you should be able to picture the world as a whole and make it important to yourself. In other words, in the minds of our ancestors, there was never one certain area.

Of course the other thing to keep in mind, is that although people in my age group all have the same respect and knowledge of the land itself, people who have lived in one area know land better than people who lived in another area. People all lived in different areas. I know the land best where I grew up as a child. It is the same for other people. When it comes to the land as a whole, the importance of the land as a whole, people think the same. Yes, that's right. Again, getting back to what I said before, the land is there for people to share. It doesn't matter where you are from. The land is there for all people to share.

PART III: INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS



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Land in Terms of Place

The central idea in my research was to attempt to understand what that piece of land *means*, in sense of place terms, to Chipewyan Dene, to Caribou Inuit, and to people of Euro-Canadian extraction. In reality, the Thelon Game Sanctuary has turned out to be a symbolic area of focus—a biological and spiritual oasis—within a larger, wedge-shaped area called the barrenlands. The Thelon Game Sanctuary is, in fact, an imposed boundary that in no way limited the thoughts or constructs of those who interact with it. The actual boundaries of the land are the treeline, the arctic coast and the west coast of Hudson Bay. But in terms of this investigation, this whole area is not of equal bearing on the central questions; the most important portion of the study area was the middle stretch of the Thelon River from the Hanbury-Thelon confluence to Beverly Lake, partly because this area was in the rough geographic center of the barrenlands and partly because this area had the oasis character which had captured my imagination, and of others who had been there.

Revisiting the Central Questions of the Research

Before addressing the question, *How does land act as teacher*, one must first consider the subordinate question, *How does land impose meaning on human consciousness?* This may be dissected into: 1) *What knowledge and attitudes do people of different cultures hold with respect to the Thelon Game Sanctuary?; and 2) How did they come to hold these attitudes and how, and in what form, are land knowledge and attitudes held and communicated?*

Before one can strike back into the voices for answers to these questions, it is appropriate at this juncture to consider the nature of the knowledge solicited by the interviews. Although there is a purely descriptive component to what people told me, and to what I found in the literature (i.e. we went fishing there, we hunted caribou there at that time of year, or we paddled on that side of the island), probing people's perceptions of place, attempting to find out what a place *means* to them, means trying to reach deep, reflective structures of knowledge which may well be buried in habit or even in the subconscious. I was disappointed in the amount of material that came to bear *directly* on the questions I was asking, and as the interviews progressed, I came to see that *land-as-teacher* is a resonant concept for most people, but finding out *how* and *what* people had learned from land was very difficult.

The Nature of Place Knowledge

I came to see that the information I was seeking was *internal*, meaning subconscious, as impressions and intuitions often are, as opposed to *external* types of knowing which have to do with conscious observation, reflection and analysis. My understanding of this distinction has grown through the execution of my research plan, but articulating this finding about the type of knowledge I came to see myself dealing with is not an easy task. There is nothing I found in the anthropological literature that was of much help. However, in Waterston's (1973) history of Canadian literature, there is a very similar distinction in ways of knowing or in types of knowledge. She writes:

> Literature is a part of life caught in words. The writer is a person who fishes with a double hook. One barb he casts outward into the given forms of landscape and society: hills, snow, city streets, facial expressions, bodily movements, gestures, talk. The other barb reaches into the inner world of temperament, dream, memory, hooking up shapes of fear and desire. Some artists use a longer and stronger barb when they fling perceptions toward the outer world. Others probe more subtly and deeply inward. Our earliest Canadian writers were conditioned to rely on the outer senses. Recent writers seem more introverted. Writing of the French-Canadian use of the motif of Northern journeys, Professor Jack Warwick summarizes the current theory about the inter-dependence of inner and outer geography: "The presence of a North in man is even more critical than the presence of men in the North." (5)[80]

While the double hook idea applies to authorship, it also seems to apply to the way in which all people perceive the world as they interact with it. We all, it seems, have inner and outer perceptions of the world. When one asks about land-as-teacher, or what land means to people, I have learned that one touches forms of landscape and society, but the place where one had to reach to find answers was into "the inner world of temperament, dream, memory, fear and desire"—into Waterston's so-called "inner geography."

Tuan and others have written eloquently about the *existence* of such a connection, but, with the exception of the bioregionalists, very few people seemed to have taken the concept into the field in an attempt to empirically derive a value or values for group "X's" *sense of place.* The reason for this hesitancy to characterize sense of place is the internality of these bonds. They are not easily talked about or defined in behavioural terms. Hay (1988) is a classic example of a person who attempts to pin down a definition for sense of place but who, in the end, comes up short. All he can say is this: "How place ... is constituted in everyday life, especially the assumptions in modern people's thought (which tend to distance them from their place) is largely unknown." (163) Intuitively, he knew of what he spoke, but practically speaking, I think he was struggling with the fact that place knowledge is internal knowledge and very difficult to get at! "People's **emotive** bonds to place ... have seldom been studied" (159), writes Hay. What I would add to that observation is that in the absence of a clear definition for sense of place, or an established protocol for going after people's deep structures of knowledge about land, or where they live, it's no wonder that more research hasn't been done. It's a very delicate and deeply seated topic.

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[80] The Warwick quote comes from *The Long Journey* (Toronto 1968): 47.

This is why Tuan's recent writing about the narrative-descriptive approach to construction of place is particularly relevant here. Through Tuan, I take inspiration to seek out—through oral history—the words of the people about the places in which they live. And buttressed by recent writing of others who have been thinking about the construction of cultural representations of place (i.e. Porteous 1990; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Andrews 1990; Cruikshank 1990; and Astbury 1990), there is reason to think that the most sensible way in which to proceed from here in this dissertation is with a narrative-descriptive approach to the material, to proceed in a discursive fashion, highlighting the patterns and the ambiguities, instead of trying to push for some grand social theory to package and possibly distort perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

But there is another, and perhaps more compelling reason to proceed discursively with further discussion of these perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, and that is a reason nicely articulated by Cruikshank (1988). Cruikshank makes the point that anthropologists no longer have the power to unilaterally decide where and how they will do fieldwork. Instead, she says, research strategies must be *negotiated* locally and based on a model of *collaboration* of the investigator with those whose lives are being investigated, replacing conventional models of university-initiated research with research that is derived of and feeds into the needs of local communities. Says Cruikshank:

> Readership of classic northern ethnographies is shifting from an academic audience to a politically astute Native audience, particularly as land claims negotiations in the North begin to attribute unexpected weight to ethnographic evidence. ... Instead of a social scientist asking questions in order to acquire raw data, the design and implementation of such research inevitably requires a great deal of attention to "insider" interpretations. Collaborative research, in fact, moves us away from questions about social structure and social behaviour and toward questions of symbol and meaning. (30-31)

Collaborative research, as exemplified in this investigation, also needs to move away from cumbersome theoretically-oriented considerations of findings because the people who are collaborating in the research—in this case the people of Lutsel K'e and the people of Baker Lake—have no interest or expertise in tackling such prose. The challenge, according to Cruikshank, is to bridge diverging streams so that locally-based projects can achieve some visibility within anthropology and so that anthropology can provide some ethnographic guidance to groups and individuals documenting languages and cultural history in the north.[81]

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[81] As an aside, Cruikshank's 1988 article "Telling About Culture: Changing traditions in subarctic anthropology" gives one pause to celebrate that *any* meaningful research—negotiated or otherwise—happened in Lutsel K'e. She discusses the unresolved conflict between models of stability and models of change in Arctic and subarctic anthropology and how native Northerners have been quick to draw attention to shifting fashions by pointing to studies they find misleading. The example she uses to illustrate this point is Lutsel K'e response to James VanStone's ethnographic work. In a footnote, and referring to Steed's 1986 article about Lutsel K'e, she writes: "A full-page article in a major Canadian newspaper ... sustained attack by people from Snowdrift on an anthropological study done in their community in the late 1960s; this book was con-

Before going on to answer the central questions of this research, I feel it necessary to acknowledge a contribution made by Mohawk Indian elder and Trent University Native Studies professor Marlene Brant Castillano to my understanding of the family of cultural biases attendant to this research. During this study, I heard Ms. Castillano speak on three occasions on the subject of indigenous knowledge:

> Indigenous knowledge is organized, transmitted, and validated in ways which are distinct from those characteristic of literate cultures. The transfer of research methods from one culture to another will therefore generate problems in making sense, in communication and in establishing validity.[82]

Castillano too contends that there is not, for indigenous knowledge, an easy or direct route into the public domain because of the nature of the knowledge. Before I relate Castillano's breakdown of the difference between indigenous knowledge and what she calls "literate" or "knowledge of scientism," I think it useful to assert that much of what I have found out about Euro-Canadian land knowledge of the barrenlands and perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary is, in itself, more like what Castillano considers indigenous knowledge than it is like so-called literate (i.e. highly rational and quantifiable) knowledge. One of the reasons perhaps why research has been so slow in coming to terms with the empirical bases of sense of place is that land knowledge, regardless of cultural derivation or permutation, *is* indigenous knowledge, and, if Castillano is right, this type of knowledge does not

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sidered a classic when I was an undergraduate twenty years ago. Resentment of anthropologists is not uncommon in the North, but this article was singular for the outrage expressed by the local people." (35)

[82] Castillano in a lecture to CHDS 500 at Trent University on February 7th, 1991: from Journal, Vol, 2, 67-70)

fit easily into existing "literate" categories, nor, it would seem, is it easily caught, caught at all, by existing research grids. The table below shows Professor Castillano's conception of two quite different ways of knowing:

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE	SCIENTISM (LITERATE)
Oral	Written
Percepts	Concepts
Multiple Views	Truth and Error
Intuitive-Affective	Intellectual
Subjective	Objective
Particular to the Context	Generalizable
Apprenticeship	Marketplace of Ideas
Metaphorical	Literal
Collectively Owned	Individual Rights

Table 2. Castillano's Ways of Knowing: Mohawk Elder Marlene Brant Castillano separates these two ways of knowing but is quick to make the point that Indigenous Knowledge is not peculiar to Indian people; other groups, she says, like women, for example, have been generating knowledge like this for years (Castillano 1991).

In much the same vein as Cruikshank, only spoken from a Native point of view, Castillano goes on to say that the great deficiency in western thinking is the dependence and reliance on the intellectual. Quoting from Northrop Frye, she contends that knowledge is much more than "subjects and objects chasing each other across the page." If the products of research are to be valid, Castillano adds, then they must be integrated into the community like yeast fermenting further change. "People know what they need." And, according to Castillano, it is only when the agenda of the researcher and the agenda of the people who are creating the knowledge are brought to within speaking distance of each other that the appropriation process is reversed. That, in the final analysis, is reason enough, above all else, to conduct collaborative research and to generate written products from the research that the "people who created the knowledge" can read. With that, we return to the business of crafting responses to the questions of this investigation.

Perspectives on the Thelon Game Sanctuary

The View from Lutsel K'e

Turning first to the Chipewyan Dene perspective on the Barrens, there is little doubt in my mind that the first and most significant indicator of the importance, sanctity even, of this topic is the way with which I was handled as an interloping researcher. If the amount of time, energy and patience it took to connect with the leadership of Lutsel K'e on the matter of simply *asking* about the possibility of collaboration—to say nothing of the investment in executing the research—in any way reflects the importance of land in Chipewyan thinking, then there can be little doubt that land is a, if not *the*, central feature of what it means to be Chipewyan. Whether I was perceived to be a spy from the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, sent to infiltrate and subvert the Dene land planning process, or as simply another in a succession of question-asking researchers who would take all and leave nothing, is not important; what is important is the fact that wittingly or unwittingly (I can't be sure) the Lutsel K'e leadership contrived to establish a series of significant barriers between my desire to know and the land knowledge of the people in the community. Letters and phone calls were never answered, airline tickets were bought and cancelled on the basis of uncertainty about whether it would be even possible to have a short meeting with members of council, an election of new chief and council confounded initial tentative permission to proceed, and when permission was given to visit the community for the purposes of carrying out the research, I was compelled to wait in Lutsel K'e for nearly two weeks before tentative permission was granted to proceed, and only then after it appeared the band was satisfied that there was something of substance in the work for the community. There was wisdom in these repeated opportunities for the band to hear about the research and for the leadership to see the researcher present himself in a variety of situations: when permission was finally given, both parties were quite clear on what was expected and what was planned and how the project would proceed; *and* that there genuinely *was* something in the research for the southern researcher and for the community. Without this mutuality, a research licence would not have been issued and the project would not have gone ahead. But the most important aspect of this initiation rite was that it established in my mind the idea that nobody off the street can wander into Lutsel K'e and expect to start talking to elders about land. Land is far too important a matter for that.

This sense of land sanctity pervaded all comments by Lutsel K'e consultants in one way or another. Sometimes a voice would be lowered, sometimes there would be a certain look in a man's eye when he spoke about an aspect of land, sometimes there would be an upwelling of enthusiasm, a brightness not before seen, when people spoke about the Thelon, or elsewhere. And sometimes, this feeling of reverence for the land would even rise far enough to enter the actual intellectual flow of the conversation—meaning occasionally, but very occasionally, people actually talked about why land was important. Mostly though, when I asked about land, the Lutsel K'e elders told me stories.

But everything I saw and heard and felt in Lutsel K'e was predicated on the image on Trevor Teed's land use map, of a reticule of "roads" and trails stretched out over the lands north and east of Lutsel K'e reaching to the Thelon and beyond. Many of these trails are still used today—some of them we used for the journey to Campbell Lake—many of the roads close to town are used more intensively now than they ever were, and some of the roads far from town haven't been used in years. The overwhelming impression from speaking to people about land was that even if a person hadn't been on a trap line for years, or even if a person hadn't been out much on the land at all, these lands on Teed's map lived within every soul and constituted an essential part of every being, as important to health and life as any other organ. Archie Catholique's notion of "open country" exemplified this notion of land as integral part of being.

The fact that Joe Boucher and Zepp Casaway and Noel Drybone and the others could tell me in great detail how to get from one place to another, noting campsites and hunting places, and where to get wood, and what happened there, and where the foxes are and who used to camp there and on and on with such complex filigree of knowledge and meaning—all of those conversations led to the understanding that Chipewyan land knowledge, in addition to being integrated into the very fibre of each being of that culture, is a complex and multi-variate phenomenon, involving place names, stories, and some direct, observational skills bound by personal experience on the land.

Research by Andrews (1990), Cruikshank (1981, 1988), and Astbury (1990) was helpful in understanding how at least two of these elements are integrated into land knowledge. It is in the stories, according to these authors, that physical geography—the land—is transmuted into a social geography where culture and land are fused into a semiotic whole (Andrews 1990: 8). And it is the names of places, according to these authors, that hold together the narratives by serving as mnemonic devices or mechanisms to recall the meaning inherent in the narrative. But it was clear from talking to people just how important was *personal* experience on the land to complete the "triangle of land knowing."

That triangle of land knowing is made of three essential items: stories, told by parents or grandparents, and often *at* the place where the events of the story took place; place names, which may differ from person to person and may in fact differ for individual places depending on the direction or season of approach; and personal experience, which in itself is raw material for stories and land memories. Of course the better a place is known, the more layers of stories one has to apply to that geography, the more names per unit area of land, the smaller the features being named, and the more personal experience a person has at that place. Every person to whom I spoke in Lutsel K'e, young and old, had parts of all three elements of this land-knowledge triangle. It is significant that to find out about the Thelon area that I was directed *only* to the elders—they were the ones with personal experience and presumably the best ones from whom to learn about that place—but as young adults in the community, Steve Nitah and James Marlowe were examples of people who knew some of the Thelon place names, and had heard some of the stories but who were hesitant to speak about this place because they lacked the personal experience that would bind the knowledge into a cohesive whole.

Even Steve Nitah and James Marlowe spoke about hunting and alluded to the bond between Chipewyans and caribou. Most consultants touched on this topic, and generally the way in which this was done was to say something about the cyclical quality of life for Lutsel K'e Chipewyan that revolves with and around the annual peregrinations of the caribou—to the Barrens in summer and back below the treeline in winter, with a shorter northward looping in the fall for the yearly rut.

In March and April, when the bulk of this research was being done, the caribou were grouping up for the long trek up to the calving grounds in the Thelon Game Sanctuary. There were animals very near to Lutsel K'e for the duration of my visit, and during that time, anyone who was able, anyone with a snowmachine or with a friend or relation with a snowmachine would be off hunting either for meat to put onto the table, or in the community freezer for storage for later in the summer.

Depending on the age of the informant, and the kinds of stories he/she had been privy to, there were perhaps four different historic cycles of which people spoke. The oldest, about which, besides the literature, only land use mapper Trevor Teed spoke, was the pre-contact round when all Chipewyans were nomadic, following the caribou up onto the barrenlands in summer and returning to below the treeline in winter. This was the annual cycle and Chipewyan situation encountered by Hearne on his late-18th-century ramblings. After the establishment of Fort Prince of Wales at the current location of Churchill, Manitoba, people continued to walk with the caribou, using small birch- or spruce- bark canoes for crossing major water bodies, but the yearly round for many widened to a huge circle that included a summer sweep into the barrenlands in summer and a sweep from east to west along, or below the treeline back to the area of Great Slave Lake, an annual round punctuated by a stop at Fort Prince of Wales for trading and supplies. Most people spoke of a much smaller yearly circles, first hooking with the trader at Fort Resolution, at the mouth of the Slave River to the west, then with the trader at Fort Reliance, at the tip of the northeast arm of Great Slave Lake, and finally with Jack Stark and the series of traders in Snowdrift which led inexorably to the current situation in which more or less sedentary community life is broken only for some by loops away from the village for trapping or hunting.

The lesson about how land knowledge is held from this talk of the yearly round is that, when Lutsel K'e Chipewyan think of land, they think first of caribou, the beast that sustains them, and then of the places where that animal will be seasonally. Land, to my consultants, does not exist in their minds independently of the caribou, or vice versa, and that space-related amalgam is tied to notions of time and season as exemplified by this talk of the yearly round. In a similar way, especially when people spoke about trapping during the 1920s and 1930s in the Thelon or the Barrens, the white fox played a similar role, along with the caribou, in setting the yearly schedule—going to the barrens in the winter now—and in linking land as a concept with animals and the yearly seasonal calendar.

As I spoke to more people about white fox and the life that bred on the barrenlands or in the Thelon area, it was evident that the processes and types of knowledge involved in trapping allowed them to learn the land in ways simply not available to people who do not trap. People spoke about going out hunting in the fall, perhaps with someone who knew the country well, and learning the general lay of the land, but not really getting to know the land until they went back to trap. A trapper has to know where the water is and which way it is moving, where the different types of vegetation are, and, most importantly, how to recognize the places where traps are set to enable him to return to collect the fur.

Noel Drybone and Pierre Catholique, J.B. Catholique and Morris Lockhart all talked about land features that they used in getting around—without map or compass. Large features were lakes and eskers to which people referred. Smaller reference points were features like "the rocks that look like trees" in the vicinity of the upper Hanbury River.[83] And it was evident from conversations that when on the trail there were even smaller features, such as rocks that had been placed on or near trails, and other trees and natural features of note that these men had in their minds—an elaborate series of images that summed to a comprehensive picture of the land in their sphere of operation. The example that comes to mind from my skidoo journey with Noel Drybone was the place at the south end of Artillery Lake at which we paid the land. It was here that Noel pointed to a dome of ice on the lake's surface—it looked like it had been made by the rising and falling of ice on a large rock in the lake—and told me a little bit about the beaver lodge story (a version of Yamoria's Arrows) that is associated with this place. "Sometimes it is big, sometimes it is not so big," he said, pointing to the ice dome. It was at this point that Noel threw tobacco on the snow and asked me to do the same with matches.

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[83] It was this feature that was associated with Marie Catholique's story about God and the Devil having a big fight. She gave me the impression that God pushed with his hands and set up these trees to keep the Devil out of the Thelon River valley.

The most striking behavioural embodiment of this deeply integrated land knowing, however, was the fact that people like Noel Drybone could navigate many hundreds of kilometres through forest and across the barrens without aid of map or compass. They told me about the special features that let them know where they were at certain times, and they told me of the importance of dogs to help them find a camp in whiteout conditions, but I was struck by the fact that we could travel for miles and miles and miles across apparently undifferentiated treeless, snowcovered tundra and reach the exact points people said we would reach. Clearly, in addition to landmark-type land knowledge and personal experience with particular routes, there is another type of land knowledge at play in the Chipewyan lexicon of ways of knowing that has to do with knowing the wind and knowing the way the snow drifts and, most importantly, knowing the deep structures in the surface of the land. The eskers east of Artillery Lake were something that people told me and showed me were important. In fact, even a pilot told me that in the winter he uses eskers east of Artillery Lake to navigate his way to the Thelon and beyond. But still I was struck by the ability—even in the absence of the sun—to travel a true course between eskers. Trevor Teed provided a clue about this aspect of land knowledge.

I asked him how one gets to the Thelon from Lutsel K'e. He replied that people had told him that you just "follow the land, follow the valleys the way the caribou do. The land goes like this," he said, facing northeast and waving the backs of his hands from his thighs away from his body. "When you get to the

Thelon," he added, "the land goes like this." And to demonstrate that he again stood facing the northeast and, with both hands together, open and outstretched, moved his arms in a sweeping motion from high on the left side of his body to low on the right side of his body. Doing the two motions again, he said, "From here the land goes like that, and when you get to the Thelon, you know you're there because the land goes like that." Sure enough, on the geological map for the Northwest Territories,[84] in addition to information about the type of rocks in the area, there are little red lines that mark "structural trends" or surface patterns in the shield, and, east of Great Slave Lake, these show a general, but quite distinct southwesterly- northeasterly trend in the configuration of the land. All of the ridges in this area run along the same pattern. And, lo and behold, the same geological map shows that in the Thelon River region there is a different type of rock and the structural trends in this area run in a northwesterly-southeasterly orientation. The map shows quite clearly that the land goes like "that" as you move northeast from Lutsel K'e and like "that" when you get to the Thelon. And in practice, although I didn't want to try it on my own, speeding across the land on a snowmachine, it was easy to appreciate the way we threaded in a northeasterly direction in the valley, parallelling the ridges. My sense is that this form of knowledge, along with the prevailing wind (the snowdrifts) and the sun, is the general direction finding aid and large-scale locator mechanism, while the landmarks are a more for pinpointing exact position.

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[84] The map referred to here is the 1251A Tectonic Map of Canada, Scale 1:5,000,000, published by the Geological Survey of Canada, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

For each of the elders to whom I spoke there were places, in most cases *many* such pinpoint places in their lexicon of remembered locations, each with a name and most with an attendant and instructive story of some kind. In regard to this repository of land knowledge within the people of Lutsel K'e, three points are evident: the first is that as people focus more on the community, knowledge of only the areas covered by hunting and trapping activity near the community and those important and selected few areas (such as Old Woman Falls, and summer camps on Whitefish Lake and elsewhere—perhaps the annual winter camp on the esker at Campbell Lake) that are visited annually by air, by boat or by quick trips on snowmachine, will be kept fresh with ongoing personal experience; secondly, as the elders die off, with them dies a staggering amount of knowledge that—because of the way it is wrapped up in the land-knowledge triangle—is not easily or quickly accessible; and thirdly, it is very clear to me now, looking back on this work, that further collaborative research in this area cannot be done without a) the researcher really knowing the language and b) the work being done *in the field* travelling with the elders to learn the names and to hear the stories in *situ* but most importantly to get the essential third component of the land-knowledge triangle, the personal experience, to tie the package together.[85]

A final comment about the importance of stories in Chipewyan land knowledge comes from something former chief Felix Lockhart told me in a tent on

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[85] The work of Andrews is particularly relevant and inspiring here because he, more so than almost any other researcher in the field, is making unique headway into Dene traditional knowledge. Not inconsequentially, he is also learning to speak and to understand Dogrib and he is travelling the land with the elders. Ideally, of course, there will soon be Dene investigators to take on this role. In the meantime it is clear what is working and what is necessary to keep the flow of the research going into the future.

Campbell Lake when we were camped there on our hunting journey. He told me that the men on this trip, in 1991, would return and tell people in the community what had happened, and that this was how the process worked. They would tell about where they had gone, what they had done, where they shot what and all of the important details of the trip. And for the elders and others who had personal experience with these places and these activities, it would be an important reconnection with the land, although on this occasion they had participated in the hunting trip only vicariously through the gestures and tales of returning hunters. That helped me see the ongoing and very current significance of *personal experience on the land* for the Chipewyans and of the terrible loss that would occur when, for whatever reason, people are unable or unwilling to connect through travel and hunting, in a personal way, with the land.

That said, I must turn now to the Thelon Game Sanctuary and the Chipewyan perspective on that area. All indications, pre-historic, historic, and contemporary point to the fact that Chipewyan people have always used this area, but that it was always at the edge of their range. It is significant, I think, that people like Antoine Michel, Felix Lockhart and Trevor Teed all pointed to Hearne's account to show that Chipewyans have always lived or at least travelled in the Thelon River valley. In any case, when the Sanctuary was imposed by the federal government in 1927 and the regulation governed in subsequent years by the RCMP the general message from the people in Lutsel K'e, and from the literature, was that this cut across traditional lines in a very significant way, and excluded the people of Great Slave Lake from hunting in a place where they had always hunted. Noel Drybone's story about being caught trapping, as a boy, on the east bank of

Artillery Lake and Annie Catholique's story about the prohibition of hunting and trapping being "news" to her family are good examples of the way in which the Sanctuary landed as a serious and unwanted imposition on Chipewyan lives. Most people had something derogatory to say about governments and government officials of all stripes when the name Thelon Game Sanctuary came up in conversation.

But by and large, when people finished maligning the government for establishing the Sanctuary, most Chipewyan consultants said something about the wonders or the beauty of the Thelon River valley and about the fact that there is wood there, wood that is needed for shelter and warmth. But from piecing together snippets of conversation during the weeks in Lutsel K'e and in the months since, it appears that the Thelon lands have a much more significant role than a place of animals and wood. J.C. Catholique and Noel Drybone referred to the Thelon as "God's country." Annie Catholique made a point of telling me about the fight that God and the Devil had had near the Thelon (resulting in the rocks that look like trees). And Trevor Teed called the Thelon area "the Garden of Eden," quoting Hearne, but emphasizing that he had been there and found those kind of qualities in the place. Teed also told me, although I never heard this myself from an elder, that Chipewyan and Dogrib elders had told him that the Thelon was called God's country because when God made the world, it was here that he began. For Archie Catholique and his brother J.C., and for Annie Catholique and Noel Drybone and several of the others to whom I spoke, the Thelon was a place of new life: it was—and is—a place where things are born. Caribou are born there in summer, bears are born there, foxes and muskoxen are born there and in summer also it is the birthplace of geese and countless other birds that go there to nest. So in this sense, in the Chipewyan view, the Thelon is much more than a functional place, or a good place to hunt, or a good place to live because there is wood for heat and shelter; the Thelon is connected, as birthplace, in an overall cyclical scheme of life on their lands.

These concepts underpin a larger spiritual *respect* for the land. People spoke about "paying the land;" Noel insisted when we reached the beaver lodge on Artillery Lake that tobacco and matches be deposited on the ice to "pay the land;" James Marlowe spoke about "paying the water" on the annual run to Old Woman Falls. Others spoke about "spiritual laws" and *Notsina*—the Creator. These and many other instances indicate a general sense of Chipewyan spirituality with respect to land. J.C.'s comments after the sacred peyote ceremony indicated that there is a distinctively Chipewyan sense of spirituality that was overridden by Christianity and to which he hopes there will be a slow but solid return. I got the impression in Lutsel K'e that for many people the land was an embodiment of the wonder and powers of the Creator. I recall one consultant explaining that, to her, the Creator was really what she took to be absolute understanding. J.C. Catholique told me that the land was the connection linking Indian people with the Creator. In characterizing the Lutsel K'e sense of place with respect to all lands in their living area, I am left to conclude that there is a strong spiritual component. The land is the connection to the Creator. The Creator is understanding. The land, therefore is the people's connection to understanding. Take away the connection to the land, take away the land and you take away hope for understanding. In this context it is easy to see why an Indian might kill—or die—for land.

The View from Qamanittuaq.

Unlike the Chipewyans whose annual round straddled the treeline, the Caribou Inuit of the Thelon region lived exclusively on the Barrens. They went often to the west end of Beverly Lake where there was and still is a massive repository of driftwood brought down from inside the Sanctuary, but all records of Inuit experience—written, spoken, and otherwise—speak of life adapted to and life lived on the barrenlands. For the Inuit there is no romance with the oasis quality of the central Thelon Game Sanctuary.

For hunters who knew the Thelon area well, especially Thomas Qaqimat and Basil Tuluqtuk who were born inside the boundary of the Sanctuary, there was a quality of the region that was worthy of special mention, and that was that it seemed to be excellent country for animals. Upstream on the Thelon from Beverly Lake was known to be a place of many foxes, caribou in season, and of course the land of the muskox. Marie Bouchard, John Pudnak and others even gave me the impression that while people were starving on the land during the famines of this century, they were of the opinion that, were they allowed to hunt inside the Sanctuary, this place would almost certainly have yielded food.

Like the Chipewyans, however, knowledge of the barrenlands for the Qamanittuaq Inuit was intimately tied to the movements and habits of the Beverly and Kaminuriak caribou herds. In summer the Inuit would spread out in small family groups and camp along rivers, including the Thelon, at places where the caribou would cross, and here they would hunt and feast on caribou and, when the weather was cool enough toward the middle of August, would begin to cache meat for the winter. Most of the caribou crossing/hunting locations I visited along the

Thelon were also places where there was a ready availability of the welded tuffs and/or white quartzite rock that was used in pre-contact times to knap stone points for hunting and sharp edges for skinning and fleshing the animals. So at these places land was known through the caribou, but the amalgam of the knowing was a blend of topographic, geological, hydrological, meteorological and biological information. Although the actual hunting was done most often from boats—qayaqs in the early days and manufactured boats since the turn of the century—thereby creating a focus on the rivers during hunting season, it was not uncommon to find flint knapping sites on promontories many miles from the rivers where people would have sat making stone points and watching for caribou.

In winter, the Caribou Inuit would group together in larger extended family units on big lakes, to see through the toughest months of the year collectively, often without fuel and relying on fish when the caribou stocks ran out. The people who lived in the Thelon River area set themselves apart from other Caribou Inuit in the way that they developed a form of wood-framed skin dwelling that would sometimes be used throughout the winter season instead of the traditional iglu.

The common thread in all seasons was the way in which Inuit life was bonded and intertwined with the yearly cycle of the caribou. *Everything*—food, fuel, material for clothing and tools, needles, thread, camping locations and travel patterns—all came at one time for the Qamanittuaq Inuit from the caribou. Hence, as one might expect, speaking and travelling with these people gave one the sense that they could discern at great distances a healthy animal from a sick animal, a fat animal from a thin one (to decide whether or not the beast was worth running after), and a winter coat from a summer coat and a summer coat from a fall coat of hair (to decide from a distance whether the animal had the kind of hide required for making clothing). These acute powers of observation and discrimination seemed to go hand-in-hand with living on the Barrens.

It became evident travelling on the land, reading about it, and through talking to Qamanittuaq consultants that on this vast, undifferentiated and barren land (at least to the non-Inuit eye)—the land God gave to Cain—the simple act of placing one stone on top of another established a powerful orientation and information system that became part of every Inuk's lexicon of land knowledge. The classical humanesque inukshuk with two legs, outstretched arms and a head (sometimes tufted with grass for hair to make it even more human) is the most obvious and well known of markers in this multi-layer marker system, but this style of one-stone-on-top-of- another indicator was just one of many different stone configurations. Most were more subtle, to the point that *any* time one rock was found on top of another, an Inuk would know that this was not something routinely found in nature and therefore must be have been placed by someone for some reason.

Rocks placed on top of each other for the purposes of building food caches, or placed in a circle to weight down the edges of a skin tent, and river sites with rocks set together for qayaq and komatiq stands marked camping sites, old or new. Rocks piled on the land would direct people to, or be themselves, cache sites where caribou meat would be stored away from wolves, foxes, bears and wolverines. Rocks piled in other ways were fox traps. And, as Luke Arngna'naaq explained so eloquently, rocks placed one on the other near lakes were markers to show where the good fishing spots were: the placement of two rocks one on top of the other constituted a distance and direction vector from the location of the sign to the location of the fishing spot. Story-form information and personal experience added to these markers had the potential to add detail about type of fish, and time of year when the fish marker applies.

Published accounts of Inuit land use (especially Freeman 1976a and b) and oral accounts from Qamanittuaq elders consulted as part of this study give an impression of large scale land use through the whole region north, south, east and west of Baker Lake, land use that tapers off substantially from the west end of Beverly Lake into the Sanctuary, but the patterns of land use, and by extension the patterns and types of navigational knowledge necessary to travel from one place to another, were much less defined in terms of "roads" or established trails than was the case with the Chipewyans. Inuit have their network of markers for location of specific places within their home territory, but the landmarks for general navigation were of a much larger scale—like the Chipewyan attention to structural trends in the geology of the lands east of Great Slave Lake. The principal navigational aid—call it a landmark—was in fact not a *land* mark as such, but the configurations of wind on water and snow on the Barrens. A recent article by Pelly highlights the fascinating issue of "how Inuit find their way in the trackless Arctic." He talks about Stefansson's observation that when clouds of a uniform colour hang low there is reflected in them for Inuit a map of the surface features below—pure white sea ice reflecting white, sand specked snow on land reflected more darkly than sea ice, but still lighter than land without snow cover. He writes:

> As the prevailing wind sweeps across the frozen, flat expanse of sea or tundra, it carves out a pattern in the ice-crusted snow. The *sastrugi*, small ridges of hard snow running parallel to the prevailing winds, are more reliable than a compass needle for the traveller seeking direction. In severe

> weather, maintaining the relative alignment of the sastrugi to the line of travel is one of the few resources left to a hunter unable to see more than a few metres in front of him. ... To the Inuit traveller, time is a fundamental dimension of distance; for example, what is two days' travel in winter may take a week in summer. Distance is also an amalgam of many other variables: weather, snow conditions, hunting success, terrain etc. ... Reality, in their world, embraces both space and time (Pelly 1991: 63-64).

The behavioural expression of this ability to travel anywhere on the Barrens is a conception of land as a plane on which are etched many lines, lines of travel, lines of snow, lines of wind, lines of tracks, lines of memory. Quoting geographer Robert Rundstrom, Pelly goes on in this vein:

> 'Given the nature of the Barren Grounds terrain, linear conceptualization of the territory may be the easiest way to bring a sense of order to an otherwise chaotic landscape, an order which allows human beings to think and act as a successful part of that landscape.' ... It follows that a hunter would not seek his prey by going back and forth over an area, but rather by travelling along a line, searching for another line—tracks—that will lead him to his object. Similarly, if "lost," a linear thinker would logically travel in a straight line until he intersects evidence of another, more familiar, line. In a linear world, it is inevitable that he will, in time, be rewarded (Pelly 1991: 60-61).

But there was an element of Inuit land knowledge that did not turn up anywhere in the literature. It was something that only arose in conversation and out on the land—mind pictures, and the role of memory in learning the subtle shapes of the hills and bald horizons in an area where one travels. In one way or another, most Qamanittuaq consultants spoke about mind pictures. For them, the mind picture was the device that seemed to integrate the name of a place with stories a person might have heard about that place with the form of the land at that place when approached from a particular direction. It was mind pictures of travelling on the land that made the elders smile when they spoke to John Pudnak and me as we made our rounds, and I suspect these were the same mental images that people used, in addition to signs on the land itself (stone markers of various kinds), to travel and hunt on the open tundra. I remember travelling in a boat with outfitter Peter Tapatai at a place on Baker Lake, well east of Qamanittuaq, where there were water horizons in almost every direction. "Almost" is the operative word here, because when I asked Peter how he knew where we were, he pointed to the thin green smear on the southern horizon and said, "Those are the hills by the Kazan River, that is Sugarloaf in that direction, and away over there (pointing northwest) that's the tip of Blueberry Hill on the edge of town." In a strip of faraway land the width of a fingernail at the end of an arm, in a world dominated by open water and blue sky, this Inuk was able with casual facility to distinguish, not only direction, but individual land features that positioned him securely within the bounds of his home turf.

It was John Pudnak who explained the role of these mind pictures and how children would be taught from a very early age to memorize what the land looked like, what markers might be there, what stories might be told there, and also to store away for another day the detail of personal experience at that place. It was the concept of mind pictures that were at the core of Nathaniel Angu'juaq's story about going to a place on his own for the first time on the basis of one visit there with his father when he was very young and a set of directions and descriptions of what the land looked like from his father. Like a library of 35 mm transparencies etched in his mind by his experience and the experience of his father related to him in story form, Nathaniel was able to project these one by one, as he came to the places where each applied, and from there be able to go in the right direction because the mind picture matched the land before him.

This visualization process of land and land experience seemed central to the manner in which I have come to understand the way Inuit hold their knowledge of land. On two occasions I was taken outside the houses of elders by the elders to visualize things that they thought I should see to understand about their view of land. Vera Akumalik took me to a pile of willow twigs and a small fireplace on the edge of her lot in Qamanittuaq and told me that that was her way of reconnecting with the land, just by having a willow fire and making tea. And Barnabus Piryuaq took me outside his house and proudly showed me a fetid iron pot full of black water, meat, bones and white, greasy scum. That was his connection to the land, he said. That pot of meat that he and his family would boil up outside. In both of these cases, explanations about the fires, about life on the land, willow fires on the banks of the Thelon—all came to me in passing conversation. I have come to see in retrospect that these words were part part of the mind picture library of these two gracious elders. As much as Andrews claimed place names were mnemonic devices to recall the stories of life on the land for the Dene, I got a sense that these tangible forms of landlife—Akumalik's willow twigs and Piryuaq's caribou pot—were every bit as much a connection to the imaginative processes of remembering and reliving life on the land. But in the Inuit case, the connection was not the place name, it was the mind picture—place names didn't seem to have the same prominence as they did in Lutsel K'e—that linked the person to the remembered experience of living on the land. There were and are names for places, but it was my impression from the collectivity of Inuit land texts that there was no use in knowing a place name if you did not also have either a mind picture to go with the name, a story about the place, or personal experience travelling in the area. And ideally one should have all three.

In all of the Inuit texts of place there was a ring of pragmatism that stemmed from the severe conditions under which people lived. For example, very few spoke about the land without also talking about the idea of survival, and just how hard it was to stay alive on the barrens, especially in winter. There was a sense of no waste of anything, words included. People talked about rare occasions when a group would get together around the drum and sing songs for entertainment purposes, for fun, and to celebrate life in an overt way, and people spoke of drum dancers' songs as stories, and of the occasional times when adults would tell *stories* in the fictionalized sense of the word. When consultants talked about the narratives that went with teaching young people about life on the land, navigation, hunting and where to get what when—how to survive—they did not think of the narratives as "stories" in the fictional or even allegorical sense of the word, they thought of the narratives as elders simply "telling experience," to use Luke Arngna'naaq's turn of phrase. "Telling experience" was an integral part of elders and parents letting their children in on the realities and exigencies of life for the Caribou Inuit on the land. For Luke (and by extension, others too) this was an important distinction. I remember him well, saying: "[It was] not so much that they would tell stories about a lot of things, but rather they always tell you a great deal more of their own experience of the things they have done in their lives."

As for the Thelon Game Sanctuary, there were vague references in the literature (i.e. Mowat 1952 and 1959) and stronger references in the spoken Inuit texts that deference to authority on the part of the majority of Qamanittuaq Inuit was absolute. People may well have starved on the Back River in the 1950s, and perhaps earlier too, because of a lack of game outside the Sanctuary. People today argue that the families who were in trouble in those famine years *knew* that the likelihood of finding food was much higher in the Sanctuary than it was in the lands to the north, along the Back River or to the southeast, south of Beverly Lake on the Dubawnt River system or further along to the Kazan River area.

One gets the sense that the Thelon River was a good place for hunting caribou, and it was a place where wood could be gathered for fuel and for building komatiqs and getting poles for their summer (and sometimes winter) dwellings, but that it was not a place that was in any way distinct from other lands as far as the Caribou Inuit were concerned. Even the fact that there were rumoured to be trees there did not render the area distinctive to the Inuit. And whereas the Indians had a pervasive historic sense of the presence of the Inuit to the east, the Inuit, by contrast, had no real sense—historic or contemporary—of the existence of the Dene to the west.

The Inuit relationship with land was a no-nonsense, no frills, meat-to-mouth existence that had very little room in it for anything but information that would increase the chance of survival. Even in the days of shamanic traditions, these taboos and rituals were inextricably tied to finding food and making ends meet as a people. I found nothing in the Inuit texts remotely similar to the Chipewyan notion of God's country or Garden of Eden. Nowhere on the planet, I dare say, is there a people who could rival the Caribou Inuit for toughness, in their ability to live with periods of starvation as a fact of life, their ability to hunt and fish and survive in extreme cold and darkness; and (in the absence of marine mammal oil for fuel) the ability to live for long periods in the winter without fuel or with only very small amounts of caribou fat to warm their dwellings and to cook their food.

The deference with which the Inuit treated the laying down of the law that prohibited hunting in the Thelon Game Sanctuary was in many ways a response derived of the strategy that allowed them to exist in this harsh and forbidding place for thousands of years: they took life as it presented itself moment by moment, day by day, and if something happened that required change, if the land didn't provide, if conditions squeezed their very existence, the Caribou Inuit seemed to have an ability to accept these things for what they were worth and to move on. There is even an Inuktitut word for that which cannot be helped: *ajurnarmat*, as explained so well by Silas Arngna'naaq when we spoke in his Qamanittuaq home.

In retrospect, two other pieces of evidence are also relevant to this point. The fundamental influence of land on the Inuit culture also may be evident in the words of Caribou Inuit elder Igjugarjuk who said to Knud Rasmussen: "All true wisdom is only to be found far from the dwellings of men, in the great solitudes; and it can only be attained through suffering. Suffering and privation are the only things that can open the mind of man to that which is hidden from his fellows" (Rasmussen 1969: 381). Similarly, knowledge that a life on the land dictates a day-by- day existential approach to living is reflected by this observation by Rasmussen's Danish friend who lived most of his life amongst the Inuit. On the subject of the "Eskimo Mind" Freuchen wrote: "He takes care of his problems for the day and trusts that he can do likewise tomorrow" (Freuchen 1961: 141).

In light of knowledge of the idea of *ajurnarmat*, one should not be surprised in examining available texts for Inuit sense of place or perspective on the land or on the Thelon Game Sanctuary that there is very little there that is obvious. Much of their cultural response to this land is wrapped up in their whole view of life, which is so ingrained as to be all but invisible to people inside the culture and people outside the culture. It is only in examining the *sense* of the texts, as one might look for themes in a novel or for motifs in a complex piece of art, that one is able to find the "it can't be helped" idea and see its connection to the land.

Finally, contemporary Inuit views of the Thelon Game Sanctuary are changing in response to the development of a uranium ore deposit west of Qamanittuaq, between the community and the Sanctuary. There has been much talk in the late stages of land claim negotiations between the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut and the federal government about the final disposition of lands within the proposed settlement area. One of the contentious pieces of land, because it is also claimed by the Dene/Metis people to the west, is the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Although historically, the Inuit have taken no more stock in this piece of land than they have in any other within their normal hunting ranges, there seems to be a distinct change occurring in attitudes toward the preserve. Developmental changes to land *can* be helped, and as such need to be discussed at length.

Life, for the people of Qamanittuaq, has been changing at a tremendous rate. There are people still living in the community—Vera Akumalik for one—who in their lifetimes have gone from neolithic technology and hand-to-mouth living on the land to central heating, store-bought food and Dallas on Friday night TV. Of the many alterations of perspective, attitudes and lifestyle that these rapid changes have wrought, one of the most significant may be a change in orientation toward the land from the pragmatic-functional approach derived of struggling to survive from day to day to a more romanticized view of a simpler, more family-oriented, less technologized life *back then*. Despite on-going life on the land and men who continue to function primarily as hunters in the community, much of what I was told in conversations, especially by elders who are no longer able to get out on the land (such as Akumalik and Piryuaq), had this romanticized good-old-days kind of ring to it.

In terms of land knowledge and postures to be struck in land claims and possible development of Inuit lands, this change in attitude may be reflected in the imposition of aesthetic and wilderness (read undeveloped) values onto what once were living territories of the Caribou Inuit. *After* people told me about being surprised when they heard about the establishment of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, they very often told me that now they think it is a good thing. Muskoxen have been sighted within a day's journey west from Qamanittuaq, to the north in the Back River area, and to the south in the area of the Back River where they haven't been sighted in living memory, or *ever* in some cases. This population increase is being credited to the protection afforded by the Thelon Game Sanctuary. Likewise, the Sanctuary is now seen as valuable and useful by many Inuit because of its legislated prohibition on prospecting and mining activity. The fact that, in the late 1980s, the community effectively shut down the proposed Kiggavik uranium development and successfully designated the Thelon River into the Canadian Heritage River System is indication of this changing perception of the land in general and of the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular. In 1927, when the federal government established the Thelon Game Sanctuary by order in council and imposed this on the Caribou Inuit who lived in that area, they were inclined to be deferential and say "It can't be helped." Now, when white southerners come with cap in hand to ask permission to proceed with a mineral development project, the response is anything but *ajurnarmat!* Perhaps more so than other cultures, and certainly as much as the Chipewyan Dene, land knowledge is currently very much in a state of flux.

The View from the South

With some notable exceptions, the Euro-Canadian view of the Thelon Game Sanctuary is a view from the south. And although very few Inuit or Chipewyans actually *lived* inside the Sanctuary, they in fact inhabited the surrounding lands, making the issue of residency a fundamental distinction between the northern native views of the Thelon and the Euro-Canadian views of the Thelon. Fundamentally, the Euro-Canadian view is a visitor's view, a traveller's view and that view is very different in scope and in kind from the view of a person who *abides* physically in a given land.

This distinction is very similar to the insider/outsider distinction picked up by Noel (1987) from the literature of place in her consideration of landscape imagery and environmental communications in Newfoundland. In this situation, the insider view is the resident's view, the Chipewyan and Inuit view, and the outsider's view is the non-resident's view, southerner's view, the Euro-Canadian's view of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. But Metis Trevor Teed and outfitter Alex Hall both seem to have crossed over from non-resident to so-called resident status, from outsider to insider. The point of cross-over seems to be the moment at which a person becomes knowingly dependent on the land for something crucial for a period of time. But these are exceptions.

Hobbs called the gentleman adventurers of the barrenlands "purposeful wanderers." They all wanted something from that place, and were prepared to submit to adventure and possible personal adversity to get it. This notion of *purpose* in many ways captures my sense of Euro-Canadians as a group in their perception of the barrenlands in general and the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular. Whether it was fame, fortune, a route to the Orient, muskoxen hides, maps, photographs, encounters with wild animals, or a long and leisurely canoe trip through untrammelled land, the Euro-Canadian Thelon texts are characterized by the possibility that whatever it was that was sought by the adventurer would be found. Across the historic spectrum of Euro-Canadians who have ventured into the Sanctuary—from Hearne to Hanbury, Russell to Radford, Seton to Street, Hoare to Hornby, Knox to Nelson and the dozens of canoeists who have headed that way—the one thing that binds them all is the fact that stowed along with the rest of their gear was an agenda, set in the south and packed for validation in their northern gear. In most cases, in spite of whatever enduring legacy may have been left in the way of written records, photographs, or maps, all that had to be done to make good that agenda was for each of these adventurers to set foot in the north and return (or have their journal returned) to tell the story.

To this day, the possibilities for Euro-Canadians remain fundamentally the same as they were for Hearne in 1770, the same as they were for the Tyrrells in 1892, the same as they were for Hanbury in 1899, for Hornby and Critchell-Bullock in 1925, for Edgar Christian in 1926, for Billy Hoare and Jack Knox in 1928, for

C.H.D. Clarke in 1936, for the Operation "Muskox" crew in 1945, the Operation "Morninglight" crew in 1978, or the groups planning to paddle through the Sanctuary this summer. The land is wild, it is uninhabited, it is beautiful, it has a hagiography of saints and spirits of dead adventurers lurking in the bushes, it has bugs and 24-hour daylight, it has wild animals and northern mystique—it has everything the frontier has always had. As park planner Jimm Simon put it, the Thelon was and is a "possible Everest."

At first I was disappointed by the amount of reflection in the many Euro-Canadian accounts of the Thelon. They were at best descriptive, at worst totally devoid of comment about the land through which people travelled. But one must remember that these are travellers' accounts and history has amply demonstrated that travellers' accounts cast but one hook, the so-called external hook, catching fleeting impressions of a place seen through the lens of the expectation brought to the place by the travellers themselves.

Luste, after pondering the accounts of all Euro-Canadian travellers on the Barrens prior to 1940, concluded that "the importance of food is a recurring theme in all Barren Land narratives" (Luste 1985: 45) and that second to this is the need for warmth . J.B. Tyrrell said that his travels on the Barrens taught him that the only *essentials* in life were food and warmth; when he travelled with his brother on the Dubawnt River in 1893, they very nearly ran completely out of food and had it not been for meeting a large herd of caribou, they might well have starved to death. Tyrell (1908) mentions losing 55 of his original 200 pounds of body weight on the trip. John Hornby, in a lasting irony, had started a novel about life in the Thelon that he was intending to call *The Land of Feast or Famine*. But in the end, when Luste asks why, in the face of starvation and cold, early travellers willingly went to the barrenlands, he invokes the romance view of the frontier. He says, "in almost every traveller's writings there is some suggestion that these men were seeking something that they could not find in civilized life" (52). He concludes by saying that a visit to the barrens is a chance for people to return and touch again the primitive, and to make this point he quotes Canadian poet Archibald Lampman's poem "Voices of the Earth." It is this primitive voice that calls to Euro-Canadians so clearly from the North:

> To him who hears them grief beyond control,
> Or joy inscrutable without a name,
> Wakes in his heart thoughts bedded there, impearled
> Before the birth and making of the world.
> [86]

After all of the texts available to Luste, I think it is an accurate reflection of the nature of those texts that to understand them and interpret them one must turn to outside sources. The external hook of the traveller simply does not catch the internal assessment of the experience. Revisiting the Euro-Canadian texts of the Thelon was a more satisfying exercise after reading classics from other places written at other times, by other travellers. One in particular is worthy of mention here because of the similarity in tone, scope and feel of the writing:

> Nature has lavished all her grandest elements to form this astonishing panorama. There frowns the cloud-capped mountain and below, the cataract foams and thunders; wood, and rock, and river combined to lend their aid in making the picture perfect and worthy of its Divine Originator. ... Oh, the wood!—the cursed woods!—how I wish I were out of them.[87]

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[86] As quoted in Luste 1985: 52.

[87] From Susanna Moodie's 1852 novel *Roughing it in the Bush* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart: 29 & 187). This particular quote came as a result of a connection drawn in conversation with my supervisor Brian Osborne.

Like our earliest Canadian writers, Euro-Canadian visitors to the Thelon Game Sanctuary were forced by circumstances, including their expectations of an encounter with the unknown and their struggles to stay warm and fed, to rely on their outer senses, and this is what shaped their perceptions of the place. In this sense, Warwick's observation about 'the presence of North in the man being more critical than the presence of men in the north' (in Waterston 1973: 5) is an apt encapsulation of Euro-Canadian texts of the Thelon.

It is interesting, however, that Euro-Canadians like Alex Hall and some of his return clients (and to a very small degree Tom Faess and some of his clients), Metis Trevor Teed, and people like Christopher Norment, who have spent considerable amount of time in the Sanctuary—all tend to the numinous when they begin to reflect on what the place means to them. For Christopher Norment and especially for Alex Hall and even for John Hornby (in the way that he mapped the land with his own names) there seems to be a point at which, after one is dependent on the land for safety, security, and livelihood, a non-resident outsider begins to shift toward the land connections and wholly integrated sense of place characteristic of insiders and residents. The veracity of Alex Hall's comments about land-as-mistress, land-as-church, land-to-be-buried on (despite his view that espouses a desire to exclude native people using *his* river in motor boats), is in many ways veracity derived of his profound sense of attachment and belonging to the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

In the final analysis, having sifted through the letters, the early travellers' accounts, the canoe journals and articles, and the transcripts of all my conversations with Euro-Canadians who know the Thelon area—and having revisited my own experiences there—I have come to see that even after a very short encounter with the land, even in the absence of day-to-day reconnections with the reality of the environment there, a tangible sense of that place can live on in the minds of travellers that is more a reflection of the traveller's personality and intentions for travel than it is a reflection of the land or what actually happened there. This is not to say that this absentee sense of place is not valid or valuable or helpful in one way or another, it is simply a way of coming to terms with apparent superficiality in the Euro-Canadian texts of the Thelon. For Euro-Canadians, there is a reality of the Thelon Game Sanctuary, a constructed reality that must be dealt with as separate and distinct from either the Dene or the Inuit view of the place. Literary critic John Moss has surveyed in total the exploration literature as a genre in Canadian writing and has come to basically the same conclusion. He writes:

> Narratives by explorers and adventurers, anthropologists and artists, strive for authenticity in their visions of the Arctic landscape by translating perceptions of actuality into literary experience. First person accounts like those by Hearne and Amundsen, or subsequent reconstructions like those of George Whalley, Harold Horwood, and Pierre Berton, deploy landscape for strategic narrative effects. In anthropological and scientific narratives by Stefansson and now obscure Robert Bartlett, in the polar quest literature of Frederick Cook and of Robert Peary or, in our own time, of Will Steger and Richard Weber, and in the metafictional narratives and fictional realism of artists ranging from Flaherty, through Yves Theriault, to Rudy Wiebe, the re-created or imagined landscape is inseparable from the impact and significance of their stories. Even the elegaic meditations of Barry Lopez and Hugh Brody reshape the very landscape they write so passionately to preserve and celebrate. ... Barry Lopez ... foremost among what might be called the "New Romantics" ... encapsulates the Arctic and its people, the flora, fauna, and geology, the light and air itself, in a great holistic vision [*Arctic Dreams*, Lopez 1986]. So sensitive is he in response to the northern landscape, and so articulate, that ultimately the Arctic seems a rhetorical, aesthetic, and metaphysical expression of his own personality (Moss 1990: 5 and 3).

The Creation and Communication of Sense of Place

For the Chipewyan Dene, sense of place is created as a result of the coming together of the three ways of knowing embodied in the land knowledge triangle: place names, land-related stories, and personal experience living, hunting and trapping on the land. The people with the most profound sense of the Thelon had some personal connection to the derivation of the place names, they knew stories of the place that were told to them by their parents or their grandparents, but they also had stories of their own. Most importantly they had an abundance of experience in all seasons with the land, they knew the trails, they knew who else used the trails and when, and finally, these people had a profound sense of respect for the land, the animals,and the way in which this world—the natural world—was the very foundation of life, physical *and* spiritual life for all Dene. And although, in living memory the Christian church has come between Dene and their sense of land spirituality, and although for all people travels on the land have been significantly diminished with increase of services and dependence on the village, here is still an active drive to communicate the Chipewyan sense of land, sense of space, sense of the Barrens and of the caribou to the young people. It's not being conveyed in the school, although that is starting to change. Trips out onto the land with local elders are becoming part of the curriculum. More and more, as the Dene land agenda is being articulated through the land claim process, people like Steve Nitah and James Marlowe are learning about the process and developing a lexicon of words through which to convey Dene land sensibilities. Increasingly, the school is becoming a part of the system through which Dene sense of place is being communicated. But elders like Noel Drybone and Pierre Catholique argue when people are being paid to take children out on the land, that this is just not the same as when the encounter between young and old was a matter of survival.

Many Lutsel K'e people spoke of the important role of the elders in keeping the ways of the land alive in the culture. The literature featured this point in a number of different ways, and as well, during council meetings and elsewhere in my experience, it was clear that the most important holders and conveyors of land knowledge were, and are, the elders of the community. These are the people who actually grew up on the land, the ones with the skills and the stories. There was a point, presumably just before the entire council decided to get treatment for alcohol dependency, that this source of knowledge was dying faster than it could be passed on to the next generation, not because the elders were not willing to teach the young people, but because the young people were not "ready" as J.C. Catholique and Felix Lockhart explained, to receive the information. But the degradation of the system was checked. The community is drying out, J.C. Catholique is finding again a Native American sense of spirituality, and stories are again being told, and created. Felix Lockhart's comments in the tent on Campbell Lake were telling comments, the ones regarding the importance of going back to the community in 1991 and informing the people who weren't on the trip what had gone on on the hunt.

I think it is significant that the Chipewyan Dene of Lutsel K'e have again attached themselves to the spirituality of Old Woman Falls and to sacred ceremonies, such as the peyote ritual, as a method of healing. These, in addition to the caribou hunting that will continue, and the trapping that will continue at least in diminished scope, are all important—even if now largely symbolic—connections to the historic and traditional ways in which Dene sense of place was derived and communicated. The old stories may one day soon be learned from published (a la Blondin 1990) as opposed to oral sources, but the insider's sense of place on the barrens will prevail for the Lutsel K'e Chipewyan.

The same situation may exist into the future for the Inuit of Qamanittuaq. The raw harshness of life on the land is no longer there for people who live in the community, but the conditions on the land have not changed one bit. The fact that community members either die, or have close brushes with death on the land in modern times is testament to this assertion. Getting out "on the land" remains a central and pressing desire for the people of Qamanittuaq, and although the range of travel is very much diminished, the stories, place names and lessons of the land remain very much the same. Aircraft and snowmachine travel in concert with synoptic land views that have come to the community through, and in concert with, land claim negotiations and the threat of development have kept at least some community members in touch with the whole of the traditional land ranges of the Caribou Inuit. And, most importantly, as long as there are caribou, the people of Qamanittuaq will hunt. This will be a continuing source of meat, land experience, mind pictures and stories for the community.

It would appear that for the Caribou Inuit the socially-derived structures for the generational transmission of sense of place are in major flux. The life of which most elders spoke—life on the land—was a situation in which connection to the land, for every Inuk, was necessary for survival. And with the way in which the yearly round was constituted, there was both the time and the opportunity for the most knowledgeable people, male and female elders, to act as teachers for the young from a very early age. But as mentioned before, this situation is no longer; children learn in school (theoretically at least) and there may or may not be room for elders to live in close proximity with their children and grandchildren the way they did when people lived on the land. It would seem that with these changes, the numinous has largely gone out of the Inuit sense of place. As land-knowledge has been formalized for institutional transmission, in programs such as the Baffin Region's *Piniaqtavut* traditional knowledge teaching package, and in books of oral history such as the one being produced by Hattie Mannik, there is a chance at least that the Inuit sense of place will change because the mode of transmission is different.

One of the elements of traditional land learning that struck me the most in conversations with elders was the prodigious amount of memorization that was necessary to hold place knowledge in order to survive. There were the names of the places themselves that had to be known. But there were also the stories about those places, and powerful recall of the subtle shapes of the land that had to be available for safe passage across the tundra. One had to know the qualities of the various types of snowdrifts, and this involved tactile, visual and spatial elements of memory. One also had to remember what various styles of rock markers meant and what individual inuksuit looked like and where they were located and the pertinent navigational or other information that each was meant to convey. If there was one capability that was *exquisitely* developed to facilitate the holding of necessary land knowledge for the Caribou Inuit, it was memory. The intellectual world for people in an oral culture, for all types of knowledge, including land knowledge and sense of place, was a remembered world, but it was also a construction of place that could be weighed, through on-going personal experience on the land, against the land itself on a regular basis. This demand on the memory is something that has diminished significantly as the traditional oral culture has given way to modern schooling and orthographically-derived ways of knowing. It may be that this shift, in concert with a growing dependence on the services community, as opposed to the land, will result in a concomitant shift in constitution of the Inuit sense of place.

For now, the reticule of mind pictures, place names, "told" experience, and personal experience on the land is the matrix into which the Inuit sense of place is woven. But even though this naturally-evolved system is breaking down, I believe that as long as the Inuit of Qamanittuaq continue to get out on the land, even as "recreation," and as long as connection to the land is maintained through dependence on the caribou and fish as a source of food, their sense of place will remain more or less intact, the way it has been for centuries. Most importantly, however, for now at least, like the Chipewyan Dene of Lutsel K'e, the Caribou Inuit of Qamanittuaq continue to define themselves in terms of their connection to the land.

For the Euro-Canadians, the sense of place of the Thelon Game Sanctuary is created largely through the oral and written myths told and published by the people who have been there. From Samuel Hearne, who brought back the "little commonwealth" idea that encouraged people to regard the Thelon as the Garden of Eden, to modern day canoeists who bring back pictures of strange pre-historic looking beasts and stories of starvation and three dead men in a log cabin, the sense of place for most Euro-Canadians is established in many ways long *before* a person steps out of the airplane on the land itself. It would seem that what people look for when they actually go to the Thelon lands is nothing more than confirmation of the romantic ideal of frontier, of wilderness, of a place where no human has ever trodden, of a place where no one in the office has ever been, the unknown land, with mythically fierce dragons, spirits of dead heroes, and the ultimate frontier on which to place out the possible dream of a heroic quest.

Important learning and insights can come from a visitor's encounters with a land such as the Thelon,[88] but whether the adventurer is in Ungava, or Ellesmere Island, or Auyuittuq Park, or on the tundra plains of Lapland seems not to matter. The *sense* of the place is one that is largely constructed *away* from the place, and probably long before a person ever sets foot on the ground. In retrospect, there was a noticeable absence of mind pictures, or images of any substance in the Euro-Canadian texts. These accounts of the Thelon leave me thinking that people attend to only what they wish to attend to confirm and support the sense of the place that they have brought with them. To do otherwise would be to deny the possible fantasy of an archetypal heroic quest. This is why, I think, that Alex Hall was so adamant about steering me away from travelling with Inuit people by motor canoe to the Sanctuary. When he said, "How would you like to have such a boat pass you during what you thought was one of the most remote canoe trips on the continent?" he was saying in essence that for his clients the wilderness illusion was sacrosanct—a scarce commodity, not to be debased. He was certain of the effect that a motor boat would have on the experience of his clients, and, like a cornered animal he was all spit and teeth when it came to dealing with the perpetrator of such an idea. He wrote:

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[88] This is essentially what my book *Summer North of Sixty* (Raffan 1990) is about.

> I don't think anyone has the ***right*** to abuse that sacred land or the right to ruin someone else's "wilderness experience" in that way. You will be abusing a lot of canoeists by running a motorized boat up the Thelon. This is why I will not be able to continue on the Thelon when and if it becomes a park. Not only will it bring more canoeists and other people and airplanes but the park personnel will fuck it up royally. They will have motor boats on the Thelon and that will ruin it forever.

The point at which a Thelon experience becomes any different than this for a Euro-Canadian is the point at which, for whatever reason—running out of food and having to shoot caribou or ptarmigan or to catch fish, or needing fuel wood for heat—a person or group becomes *dependent* on the land for something. Staying on the land for an extended period of time, as exemplified by Christopher Norment and the crew of adventurers who spent the winter of 1977/78 in the Sanctuary, also seems to allow some souls to escape the questor's sense of place and, in lieu, find some more enduring sense of belonging to the place, more akin to native sensibilities. But even at that, in the two published accounts of this experience (Common 1978; Norment 1989) the place was never the same after it was defiled by the serendipitous exit from orbit of COSMOS 954 and the ensuing hoard of military personnel who came to brave the cold and clean up the mess. It is only when a person becomes dependent on the land, or stays there for an extended period of time, that a person begins to define himself or herself in terms of the land.

In my book *Summer North of Sixty* I proposed the existence of something I called "nativity", meaning the extent to which people feel they *belong* to a particular place. I arrived at the concept through a meditation of sorts on a series of long canoe journeys through the Northwest Territories. Nativity was an expression of the extent to which a person felt “native” to a place and, at the time, I supposed that it was possible for a non-aboriginal to be as “native” to a place (i.e. have the same level or feeling of belonging—or “nativity”) as a non-aboriginal. This study has turned up potentially powerful validation for that concept in the form of outfitter Alex Hall who gives all the indications that he “belongs” to the Thelon area every bit as much as any resident of Lutsel K'e or Qamanittuaq, perhaps more so in some cases. The thing that Alex Hall (and to a lesser extent Tom Faess, Christopher Norment, Robert Common, Ernie Kuyt and others like them) has in common with Felix Lockhart and Noel Drybone (and others) in Lutsel K'e and Luke Arngna'naaq and Vera Akumalik (and others) in Qamanittuaq is the extent to which these people *define* themselves in terms of the land. The reason why the people of Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq and people like Alex Hall fight with such veracity for the Thelon Game Sanctuary is because their sense of this place more or less constitutes an existential definition of *who they are.* Along this same line, one might then argue that most Euro-Canadian visitors to the Thelon Game Sanctuary define themselves elsewhere and/or by other means and as such have little of Thelon land invested in themselves, and vice versa, and hence have a much less clearly developed sense of this place. It seems that when a person comes to define himself or herself in terms of a given piece of land, it is then that the *sense* of this place is profound.

Components of Sense of Place

These various texts of place reveal four major strands connecting the *land* with *scapes* in individual Dene, Inuit and Euro-Canadian minds.

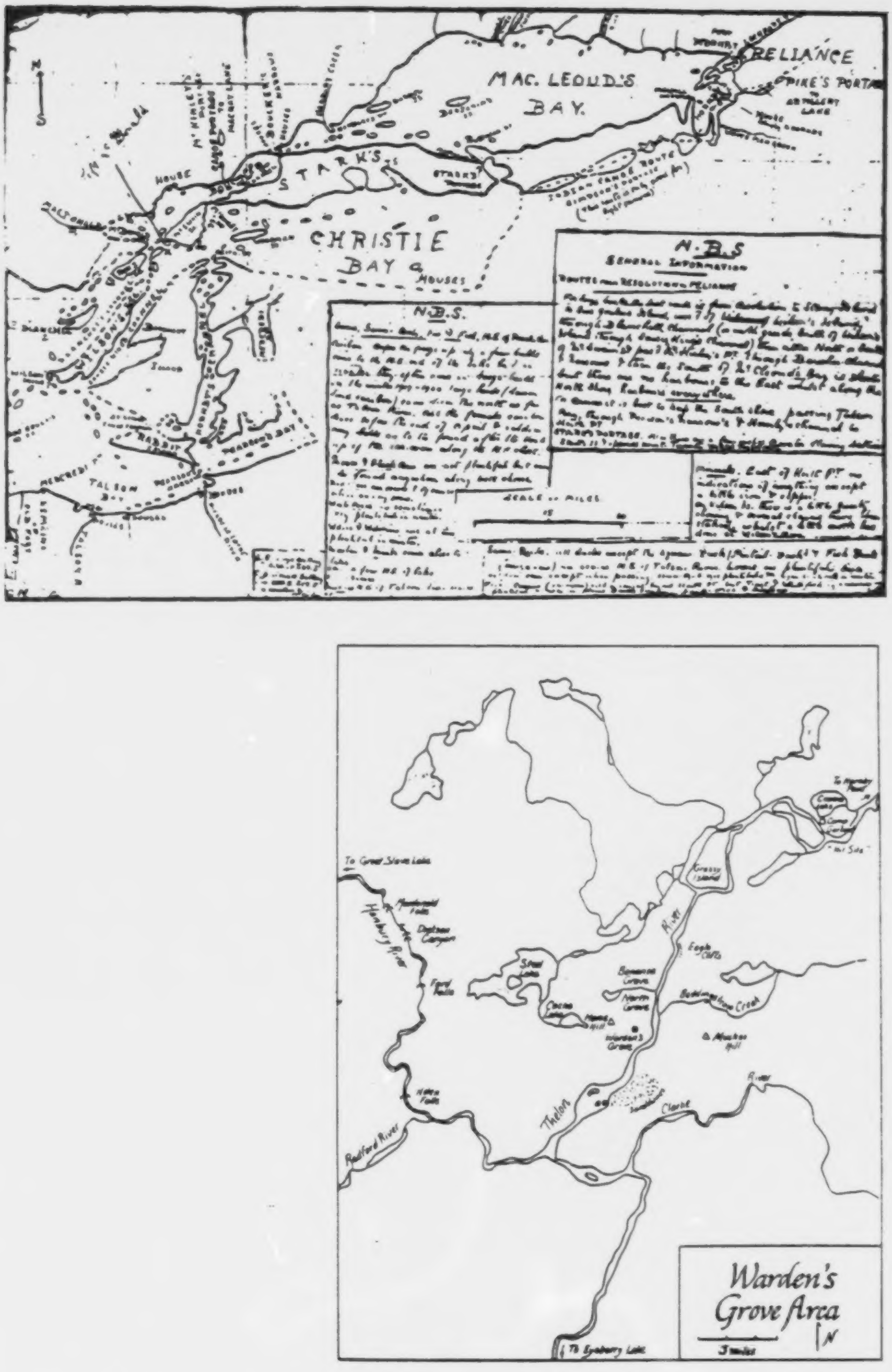
RELIANCE
PIKE'S PORTAGE
MAC. LEOUD'S BAY
STARK'S
CHRISTIE BAY
HOUSES
N.B.S.
GENERAL INFORMATION
SCALE OF MILES
TALSON BAY
To Great Slave Lake
Hanbury River
Thelon River
Clarke River
Radford River
Grassy Island
Eagle Cliffs
Warden's Grove
Muskox Hill
Warden's Grove Area
N

Figure 11. **Toponymic Connections to Place:** John Hornby's map of the eastern end of Great Slave Lake (top) and Christopher Norment's map of the Warden's Grove area on the Thelon (bottom) illustrate the propensity of people who get to know land well to give familiar places idiosyncratic names that have special meaning for the namer.

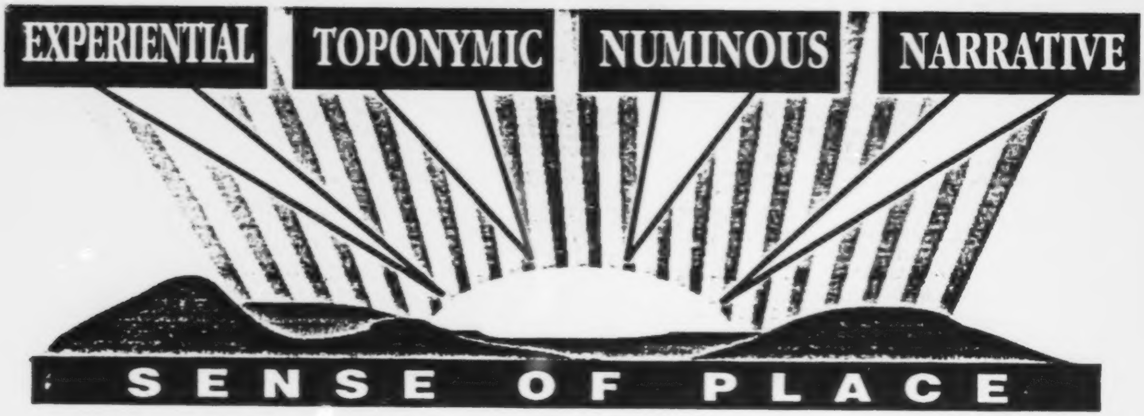

Figure 12. Components of Sense of Place

First there is a *toponymic* component having to do with place names and with the process of naming places. It can be easily accepted that the Chipewyan and Inuit have a much more fully developed and finely tuned system for place naming (and a more developed sense of place) than most Euro-Canadians, but I think it is interesting that Euro-Canadians with a strong sense of place for the Thelon also have their own naming systems that go well beyond the maps. John Hornby, Christopher Norment, and Alex Hall all had their own names for places in the Thelon area, and this I take as an indication of their rich knowledge of various local areas but also as an indication of their attachment to the place. In fact, Hornby's map of the east end of Great Slave Lake, drawn in 1922 to help government mapper Guy Blanchet through the region (Whalley 1962: 132), and Norment's map of the Warden's Grove area (Norment 1989: xv), Figure 11 on page 378, are surprisingly similar to Inuit hunter Puker'luk's map (Figure 7 on page 217), drawn for Knud Rasmussen, in the way that it shows the highly developed and detailed system of place names to describe an area that is well known to these men. This map evidence of place names is similar, I would argue, to the way in which outfitter Alex Hall knows the Thelon River as described in the excerpts from his conversations with me under the heading "Land Knowledge." One might even go so far as to follow up the antithesis of this point and argue that the *lack* of sense of place, the *lack* of connection or bonding to place exemplified by most Euro-Canadian visitors to the Thelon Game Sanctuary, is illustrated by the absence of detail place name use in their accounts of being in the region and by the apparent absence of any effort to give special places names for purposes of quick identification in speaking or writing about their experiences. The existence of an elaborate naming system speaks of an ability to discriminate one sand bar from the next, one bend in the river from another and one stretch of tundra land from the next; it also points, I would argue, to the existence of a stronger sense of place.

Secondly, there seems to exist what might be called a *narrative* component to sense of place. Andrews (1990) identifies four different types of narrative and suggests that these are all at play in Dene land sensibilities. Picking up on anthropological work done with Western Apache Indians in the United States, Andrews lays out the categories of narratives as illustrated below:

NARRATIVE CATEGORY	TEMPORAL LOCUS	PURPOSES
MYTH	in the beginning...	to enlighten; to instruct
HISTORICAL TALE	long ago ...	to criticize to warn; to shoot
SAGA	modern times	to entertain; to engross
GOSSIP	now ...	to inform; to malign

Table 3. Major Categories of Dene Land-Narrative: Taken from Andrews (1990: 7) as adapted from Basso (1984).

Regardless of whether these categories span the full range of narratives types in Dene, Inuit, or Euro-Canadian Tradition, and irrespective of whether or not the people in question would recognize these or other titles for the kinds of stories that are told about land, I have encountered all of these types of narrative in the course of this research. Whether the narrative has to do with how the land came to be (i.e. "in the beginning"), or how things used to be living on the land (i.e. "long ago"), or with telling the tale of current travel on the land (i.e. our snowmachine trip from Lutsel K'e to the Sanctuary in the spring of 1991), or with gossip in Lutsel K'e about Inuit posturing and hyperbolic claims, and vice versa, to support claims that the other is trying to curry favour with the federal land negotiators—all of these types of narrative support and demonstrate the connections to the land of the teller, the listener(s) and of the cultures in which the dialogians are immersed. *Most* of the comments from Inuit, Indian and Euro-Canadian consultants about the Thelon fall, in one way or another, into the category of narrative that is derived of their sense of place. What sets apart Inuit and Chipewyan from most Euro-Canadian narrative is that the native narrative is set into the land-knowledge triangle, and integrated into the mix of place names and personal experience that has for many years been used by elders to teach young people about land and survival. In any case, the bond between people and place involves a significant component associated with narrative.

A third form of connection of people to place arising from this investigation of the Thelon Game Sanctuary is what might be called an *experiential* link to the land. One can learn names of places from a map or from listening to stories told by an elder, or one can read about the place in a magazine or see 19 back-to-back slide shows about a place, and still, without any kind of *personal* experience with the land itself, it appears that any *sense* of that place is very much limited.

Because this may seem like a statement of the profoundly obvious, I hasten to add that it appears that not *every* experience in the Thelon Game Sanctuary leads to a deepening of sense of place. It is possible, or so it would seem from the Euro-Canadian accounts, for a person to visit the place with an outfitter on a guided trip, or even on their own trip with perspective narrowed to the river corridor exclusively and/or with sight shortened to map references only, and to return with no appreciable new insights or observations of what the land was like or what the land had to offer. But, for people who pay attention to the nature of the experience on the land, or for people who are forced by circumstances such as cold or starvation to pay attention to the land, the personal encounter with the land can deepen and enrich the sense of that land.

For the Chipewyan people, personal experience with place seems to be the third element in a tripartite configuration of understanding, the land-knowledge triangle, which plays a central role in native survival on the land. Andrews' (1990) comments about needing to learn the names and the stories *in situ* and comments by people like Noel Drybone and Joe Boucher make it clear that the land cannot be known to the fullest extent until there is personal experience to tie together other forms of knowing, and that personal experience must be with living, travelling on and using the land to survive. The Inuit notion of mind-pictures is a concept similarly integrated with personal experience on the land. A person might be told stories—given a verbal slide-show, as it were—by an elder about how to get to a place, but this knowledge would not be complete, or finished, until the hearer of the "told experience" had been to the places and set everything that was spoken into the complex of sights, sounds and sensations that comprise personal experience with a place. And, not surprisingly perhaps, the type of knowledge that compelled people to write to the federal government when the wilderness disposition of the Thelon Game Sanctuary was threatened was based on personal experience. People spoke of their valuing of the Sanctuary in academic terms but this was almost always couched, prefaced, or predicated on comments about *personal experience.*

The one type of experience with place that has come to the fore during this investigation involves *dependence* on the land, and the kind of attention which that relationship between person and place implies. I was struck by the difference in detail and substance between the comments of a person—Inuit, Dene, or Euro-Canadian (like Gus D'Aoust)—who traps, and who is dependent on the land and his knowledge of it for survival, and a person who merely visits on a self-contained canoe trip. The trapper knows the land in intimate detail, while the canoeist has a hard time conjuring up images of even the places where camps were set. The only time, it seemed, when a canoeist's knowledge and views of the land would become similar to those of a person who hunts or traps, is when the canoeist or the Euro-Canadian became dependent (or helpless) through starvation or need for wood heat or shelter. I conclude that there is a point at which the bond between person and place makes an almost exponential jump in magnitude, and that is the point at which the person becomes dependent on the land for something of consequence to survival. I think it is more than coincidence that the two Euro-Canadians who are most connected to the Thelon lands are both hunters. Both Alex Hall and Tom Faess have a profound sense of belonging in the barrens, and part of this connection is an abundance of personal experience in the land. Even though the hunting is or was not done in the Sanctuary itself, the experience of hunting and coming into contact with land through the meat of caribou and geese is an crucial component of that experience.

Another indicator of this notion of dependence comes in the form of a second hand story I heard from a park planner in Yellowknife who told me about hearings regarding the proposal to make a national park at Wager Bay. He told me of an Inuit elder who was very upset about white people getting in amongst the caribou in that area. The planner told the elder that it was okay, the people who would be coming to the park would not be harming the caribou in any way, they would only be taking pictures. The elder told the planner that *that* was exactly what he was worried about. It would be fine, he thought, to give the visitors a gun to let them shoot caribou and—for the people and the caribou—to get something useful from the encounter. But to let people loose with cameras in amongst the herd, this would serve no useful purpose at all, it would only bother the caribou.[89] The message of this tale is that hunting binds the hunter to the caribou and as such, at least for the Inuit elder, makes this a worthwhile, and adaptive, expenditure of energy. And if the act of hunting binds the hunter to the prey, one could also argue that this also, by extension, binds the hunter to the place in which the hunt takes place.

The final connection between people and land revealed by this study is what might be called *numinous*, the spiritual bond between people and place. There can be no doubt that for my Inuit and Dene consultants, and for a small number of Euro-Canadian contributors to the research, there is a sense a some kind of divine presence in their encounters with the land. People in Lutsel K'e spoke of the land as an embodiment of the great works of the creator, and as such a link to the creator, a link to understanding. For Chipewyan people the land at Old Woman Falls on the Lockhart River was a place imbued with healing powers of the creator. The omnipresent aura of the creator was to be recognized through payments to the land, for safety's sake and for the sake of honouring the force behind all life that somehow lives in the land. For the Inuit of Qamanittuaq, the times of demons and fears of shamanic beliefs have passed from common cultural practice to the realm of mythology and art, but there remains a powerful belief in the sanctity of the land and all connected to it that can't be explained. Anthropologist have written at length about Inuit and Indian beliefs and taboos, which, they would argue, speak to the spiritual connection between people and place, but to that this study adds simply the observation that there was a look on the faces of consultants and a feel to the circumstances of the discussions when it came to speaking from the heart about land, that transcended the rational. For the purposes of this analysis and discussion of sense of place in the Thelon Game Sanctuary, I wish only to highlight that in the most profound bonds to place I encountered—and I encountered these in all three groups—there was an at times overwhelming sense of inadequacy in words alone to convey the essential nature of what people were trying to convey. I give this component of sense of place the descriptor, numinous—meaning all that is awe-inspiring, all that transcends the rational, all that touches the heart more than the mind, all that goes beyond names, stories and experience and yet still plays a significant role in the bond that links people and place.

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[89] This story was told by Robin Reilly, a section head for GNWT Department of Economic Development and Tourism, during a meeting in March 1991.

Since Mohawk spokeswoman Ellen Gabriel asked why "someone should have to die for nine holes of golf," a couple of books have been written about what has been called "The Indian Summer" at Kanesatake, near Oka, Quebec. The most comprehensive of these, *People of the Pines: The Warriors and the Legacy of Oka* (York and Pindera 1991), still does not approach an answer to this simplest of questions. Looking at Oka through the lens of the cross-cultural perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary shows the potential power in the insights about sense of place that have emerged: they are simple but far-reaching. Why did someone have to die for nine holes of golf? A possible answer is thus: a man died at Oka because the government officials involved did not or could not see that the contentious land was land that provided for the Mohawks of Kanesatake—through their place names, stories, personal experiences, and numinous connections to that land—an existential definition of who they are. Nor did the Mohawks have any way to tell the government that if you take away the land, if you take away the connection to the land, then you remove a people's identity, a people's sense of who they are. And, if the Mohawks are in any way similar to the Chipewyans of Lutsel K'e you may, in fact, by taking the land away from them, be taking away their connection to the creator—to their understanding of life's most fragile and important strands. If we are to come to terms with native land claims, we have first to come to terms with native sense of place. That much, to me at least, is crystal clear in the Thelon example.

The Land As Teacher

It seems only fitting at the end of this dissertation to return to the fundamental question asked at the very beginning, *How does land act as a teacher?* It was a question I hoped would integrate seemingly disparate and disconnected personal interests in landscape, in the Canadian North, in environment and in education. After spending 20 months on the project— nine weeks and 1200 km on the land,[90] six weeks and 33 interviews in the communities, and what seemed like a lifetime to travel 25,000 km in chartered bush planes and commercial jets;[91] after producing and wading through 574 pages of transcripts, 45 hours of audio tape, 960 pages of journal entries, and 3,500 photographs; and after putting it all together during eight exhilarating months of writing, teaching, family life, and 4:44 mornings, I am pleased to report that there may in fact be, within reach, an answer to this question.

There is, apparently, more to it than I'd originally thought. Of the hundreds of points, counterpoints, observations, contentions, images and sensations that create the overall hologram of this investigation, several recollections create the image of land-as-teacher:

> I think of the profound navigational knowledge held by Chipewyan, Inuit and some Euro- Canadian people and of travelling with Noel Drybone, Peter Tapatai and others like them, and how not one of them uses a formal map.

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[90] Including my original 5-week canoe trip through the Sanctuary in 1983.

[91] It may be of interest to some that the predominant olfactory recollection of this grand doctoral adventure is the not pungent aroma of smoked fish or the tangy and fresh smell of the tundra—it is the smell of two-stroke smoke and kerosene. Nowadays without planes, all-terrain vehicles and snowmachines, *no* person, regardless of culture would be visiting the Thelon Game Sanctuary.

I think of the deep and abiding appreciation for life and of the pervasive sense of order and destiny in the teachings of the elders with whom it was my very great privilege to speak. I recall their connection to the land through the Creator and of the special gratitude that simple survival on the Barrens breeds on a moment-by-moment, day-by-day, season by season, year-by-year, lifetime-by-lifetime, generation- by-generation basis.

I think of the native sense of time, of waiting in Lutsel K'e, and of the Chipewyan ability to move when conditions warrant and to sit—for days if necessary—when they do not. I think of J.C. Catholique's comment that the only thing we own is *time*, a gift from the Creator. I think of the Inuit notion of *ajurnarmat*, of seasonal time, and of life pulsed with caribou tide. I think of Radford and Street being killed by the Inuit because of their impetuous and quick tempered Euro- Canadian nature.

I think of Ron Desjarlais in Lutsel K'e who, when I told him I was interested in land-as-teacher, said that he was not used to whitemen saying stuff like that.

I think of stopping at the foot of Artillery Lake with Noel Drybone and putting matches on the frozen land. I think of the Chipewyan notion of respect, of Old Woman Falls and of the Inuit practice of giving back to the land by leaving it the way it always was.

I think of Trevor Teed's story of his friend dying when they fell through the ice and of his reflection on the finality and purposefulness of the land as teacher.

I think of Professor Wadland's notion of borders and how if sense of place is a measure of the extent to which we define ourselves with respect to place, then this investigation must also be about the land's role in defining the margins of who we are.

I think of place names and the difference between a person who would name a place after one of its significant features and a person who would name a place after an Earl.

I think of the character in York's novel *Snowman* who, in recreating the Hornby scenario in the Thelon River valley, came to the conclusion that "the centre is everywhere." And I contrast this to D.J. Duncan's observations (1983: 53- 54) that: "A non-native awakes in the morning in a body in a bed in a room in a building on a street in a county in a state in a nation. A native awakes in the centre of a little cosmos—or a big one, if his intelligence is vast—and he wears this cosmos like a robe, senses the barely perceptible shiftings, migrations, moods, and machinations of its creatures, its growing green things, its earth and sky."

I think of *nativity*, and of being left on the Tundra at the end of my solo journey and how frightening that was, but also of the abiding sense of peace that slowly emerged when I began to understand that there is great instructive power in adversity and that getting worried about things that can't be helped is a waste of human potential.

I think of Alex Hall and his 17-year romance with the Thelon Game Sanctuary, how he would kill for it, how it is his church and his mistress, and how, when he dies, he wishes his ashes to be spread there.

I think of an 1883 letter to the editor of the *Montreal Daily Star*, given to me by a fellow student, saying "The positivist's position seems to me much like that of the swine ... with his snoot in the gutter, oblivious to ideas of aught beyond the mud, that on turning up a pearl, iridescent with all the lights of heaven blended into a round white emblem of perfection and purity, spurns it as not coming within the range of his uses—a thing transcending his powers of speculation." And of José Coronel Urtecho who scoffed: "There is no fucking reason to pay attention to the fanatics of objectivity: They are scared of human pain. They don't want to be objective, it's a lie: they want to be objects, so as not to suffer" (Galeano 1991, *The Book of Embraces*: 10).

I think of Apsley Cherry-Garrod who said "Polar exploration is at once the cleanest and most isolated way of having a bad time that has yet been devised" (*The Worst Journey in the World*: 4); and G.K. Chesterton who remarked, "Adventure is an attitude toward discomfort;" and of the late Arthur Moffatt who was quoted as saying, "The only real adventure pits man against nature" (Moffatt 1959: 71); of Vilhjalmur Stefansson to whom adventure was "a sign of incompetence;" and I think of Caribou Inuit hunter Igjugarjuk, who said: "All true wisdom is only to be found far from the dwellings of men, in the great solitude; and it can only be attained through suffering. Suffering and privation are the only things that can open the mind of man to that which is hidden from his fellows. (Rasmussen 1969: 381)"

I think of Joanne Page and her poetic contention "That it takes so long/for the journey to reveal itself/distance only a point on a line/looking back" (from the Foreword of this document).

And finally, I think of how few of these insights meant anything at all until I had actually interacted with the place and with the people who are attached to it.

All of these elements point to *place* as a central force in shaping lives and views. And if one accepts that it is reasonable, on the basis of all that is implied in the above illustrations, to assert that land can be considered a teacher of sorts, then a next logical step would be to ask what kind of teacher the land might be and how it might go about its pedagogical work. Drawing from Chipewyan Dene, Caribou Inuit and Euro-Canadian traditions, it seems to me that knowledge of and from the land is highly integrated knowledge, meaning that it cuts into and spans all three of Bloom's domains of learning—cognitive, affective and psychomotor

(Bloom 1956)—and very likely goes well beyond such a simplistic conceptualization of knowledge and into the realm of Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1983) involving linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, personal and a host of other ways of knowing.[92] Knowledge of place is also interdisciplinary knowledge in that it can be caught or taught in no one subject area, such as geography, or science, or linguistics or anthropology.

Taking even the four components of place, as revealed by this investigation—toponymic, narrative, experiential, and numinous ways of knowing the land—and accepting the integrated and interdisciplinary nature of the knowledge, and weighing these against current models of teaching and learning (i.e. Joyce and Weil 1980), it is quite clear that any model of teaching and learning predicated on objectivity, testable truths, and scientism could never deal adequately with toponymic, narrative, experiential *and* numinous ways of knowing.

The only model of teaching that in any way approaches a fit with the pedagogical link between people and place, and as such the only model that comes close to helping to understand the land as teacher, is what is called in the literature "experiential education" (Kraft and Sakofs 1985). Experiential Education has been variously characterized as contextual learning or learning by doing, and is generally thought to have a three-part process associated with it.

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[92] It is interesting that in a relatively new book by Castner (1990) dealing with what he calls "a perceptual approach to geographic education," echoes of Gardner's work turn up in chapters on visual, musical, artistic, scientific and cartographic ways of perceiving the world.

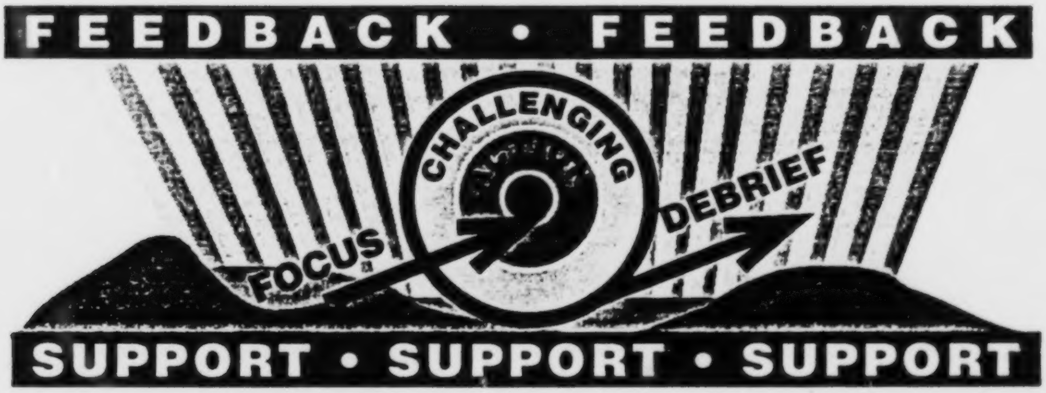

Figure 13. **The Experiential Learning Cycle:** From Joplin (1985), shows the main elements of the experiential learning process: focus, leading to challenging action, which is debriefed to allow learners to take learning from one experience to the next.

If land acts as a teacher, setting the four components of place against Joplin's experiential learning cycle allows one to see that it follows in more than a rudimentary way the process of experiential education. Focus on the land comes for native people through the need to survive, and this is why, perhaps, that the notion of becoming dependent on the land for food or for heat and shelter appeared to be a point of change-over from outsider to insider, from resident to non-resident. As soon as one is dependent on the land, there is a focus on what is going on in that context that starts the experiential learning cycle. The challenging action, in Joplin's terms, is the act of surviving, or, in terms of the four components of place, the personal experience or "experiential" component. For a person to learn from the land, there must be, as explained earlier, this crucial personal experience with the place. The toponymic and narrative component of place learning complete the experiential learning cycle by giving the learning names—mnemonics— and stories and a process of story making and story telling through which to reflect on what has happened during the experience on the land. These reflections, the names and the stories, then become—if you believe Joplin—part of the focus for the next learning experience. The only component of place left is the numinous, and I suggest that this part of sense of place forms the overall context in which the cycle operates. If you believe that the land is a teacher and that it is imbued with instructive powers, if you are prepared to be awed, humbled and inspired by the land, if you are prepared to accept that there are forces at play in the interactions between people and place that are beyond rational explanation, then this becomes the numinous context in which the whole cycle revolves.[93] The final conclusion of such an argument is that land indeed acts as a teacher, and through a very specific process that has been called experiential education.[94]

This mapping of the four components of place onto the experiential learning cycle is really just an intellectual exercise, but it is a potentially important exercise because is provides a plausible explanation of the *process* through which sense of place is derived, and of the centrality of the four components of place as revealed by cross-cultural perceptions of the Thelon Game Sanctuary. For example, one might be dependent on the land for survival, and have an experience on the land, such as in a plane crash, but without the reflection and narrative component of the process, it is highly unlikely that any significant sense of place would develop for that person with that place. Likewise, a person might have a map and learn all the names, and have an intellectual focus on a piece of land, but without personal experience, it would be very difficult to develop a lasting sense of that place. And similarly, a person might be dependent on the land for food, have a significant personal experience on the land, and live to tell the stories about it, but, with no sense of the numinous—the unexplainable, the spiritual—they would very likely never come to define who they are on the basis of that place.

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[93] Recent work by Porteous (1991) explores transcendental experience in wilderness as experienced by Euro-Canadians.

[94] The seminal book *The Experience of Nature* (Kaplan 1989) is very relevant here.

Finally, when I think of typonymic, narrative, experiential, and numinous connections to place, and when I think of the experiential learning cycle, I think of how un-school-like are these ways of knowing and this educational process. I think of Mohawk elder and teacher Marlene Brant Castillano who spoke of the principles and characteristics of traditional western industrial scientific knowledge She spoke of scientism and knowledge based on facts and concepts; intellectual knowledge that is objective, literal, individually-based and rife for what she called the "marketplace of ideas." Land knowledge—knowledge that makes up sense of place—names, stories, personal experience on the land and spirituality doesn't seem to fit that model of knowing *at all.* Perhaps that is why white people have a hard time bonding with the land and have an even harder time trying to understand why native people start shooting when their land is threatened.

Marlene Brant Castillano set in opposition to scientism what she called "indigenous knowledge." She characterized this way of knowing as that which is based on percepts as opposed to concepts; welcoming of multiple views as opposed to the harsh duality of fact or fiction; intuitive, affective *and* intellectual as opposed to strictly intellectual knowledge; subjective as opposed to objective; particular to the context as opposed to knowledge not grounded in place; knowledge based on an apprenticeship model as opposed to knowledge of and for a marketplace of ideas; metaphorical as opposed to literal knowledge; and collectively, as opposed to individually, owned fruits of knowing. I can only conclude that the congruence and fit between the four components of sense of place and Castillano's ideas about traditional knowledge points to the notion that for people who hold this type of knowledge, the *land* has been their teacher.

I think it is interesting that one of the most cogent keynote addresses at the 1991 Learned Societies Conference in Kingston, Ontario[95] was on the topic of "The Future of Local Control: Politics and Native Community Development." It began with the following caveat:

> I have a number of things to say about politics, self-government and the future of Indian people but unlike most of the other speeches that will be given at this university this week, my remarks won't meet the test of academic rigour. I am not a lawyer, a social scientist or an expert on most of the issues I'm going to talk about. My comments are not based on surveys, polls or statistics. They are based, for the most part on my opinions. My opinions are based on my experience which is concentrated on Indian life in Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec and the Northwest Territories. I am not very knowledgeable about Indian life in other parts of Canada or about the Metis or the Inuit. Lastly, I must admit, my opinions are coloured by my dreams for my people. I am a strong believer in Indian autonomy, in Indian self-government and in a rebirth of Indian traditions. So now that you know where I'm coming from, so to speak, it's time to begin. (Maracle 1991: 1)

This, in my estimation, is a voice of the land-as-teacher.

This new piece of knowledge advances considerably the notion of *nativity* or what it means to belong to the land, and it has potentially major consequences for the world of environmental education. In *Summer North of Sixty* I speculated on the existence of a quality of humankind—nativity—that served the purpose of bringing into common parlance the attachments between people and place. That quest began with wondering what it meant to be native to a place. In the context of this investigation, *nativity* seems to be very similar to the extent to which people define who they are in terms of place. In other words, nativity is a concept parallel to sense of place, as conceived in this study. The exciting part about the connection is that if that parallelism is true, as I believe it to be, then the four components of place—toponymic, narrative, experiential and numinous knowledge—are the ingredients of what allows people to have a sense of belonging to land they know well.

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[95] An address to the Canadian Association of Rural Studies, Maracle (1991).

Elsewhere (Raffan 1991) I have commented on the failure of environmental education to achieve its paramount goal, namely to spur students to be more active on behalf of the environment. It appears that people do not become active on behalf of the land on which they live until they begin to define who they are in terms of the place in which they live. The type of knowledge that it takes to develop this sense of place is not cognitive, as most environmental education curricula would have you believe. A cognitively-based environmental education curriculum would create a generation of more informed polluters who have no real attachment to the *place* in which they live—which is exactly what has and is happening. The people who *are* active on behalf of place, people who are chaining themselves to bulldozers, men and women who at great personal risk are fighting against degradation of their backyards, people like Alex Hall, Zepp Casaway, ' C. Catholique, James Ukpajaq and Luke Arngna'naaq—people like the residents of Kanasatake—are souls who, to a substantial extent, define themselves in terms of land. It is then that the fight begins. This means that the knowledge that matters, if we care about getting people active on behalf of the environment, is the knowledge that binds them to place—toponymic, narrative, experiential and numinous knowledge. Thus I intend to use the findings of this investigation to explore how we might get kids out of school to nurture these *extra*-cognitive ways of knowing about place in lieu of more apparently useless banter about food chains and endangered species.

As for the implications of this research for policy making with respect to land, for native land claims, for the people of Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq, and for students of place, the potential contribution of this work to the world beyond its pages is potentially very powerful. But now is not the time for speculation. My hope for the people of Lutsel K'e and for the people of Qamanittuaq is that this work will be of some assistance to them in getting what it is in life that they need and that they want. My hope for the Thelon Game Sanctuary is that it will remain undeveloped in perpetuity and that there will always be an Alex Hall to keep it safe from harm. My hope for the rest of us is that we can take to heart these findings, weigh them, talk about them, move forward our understandings with them, and use them to whatever advantage we can to "witness creation and to abet it ... to notice each thing so each thing gets noticed ... and to notice the beautiful faces and complex natures of each other."[96]

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[96] Annie Dillard, as quoted in Chapter 1.

Appendix One: Notes on Method

The way in which this study was conducted has its roots and rationale in the literature of participatory action research and new ethnography. A central principle in this type of investigation is the involvement of those being investigated in negotiations about the nature and outcome of the work. As such, important support literature includes *Participatory Action Research* (Whyte 1991), *The Voice of the Past* (Thompson 1988) and writing by investigators such as Hugh Brody in *History Workshop*, the journal of socialist historians.

The inclusion of the "other" in the structure of the research changes not only the way the products of the research look, but also, potentially the writing voice as well. This dissertation is purposely written in conversational, vernacular prose to facilitate it being read by people in Lutsel K'e and Qamanittuaq. It is as this point that this research intersects the literature of empowerment and joins collaborative work being done in other places by other researchers (see Sleeter 1990 for examples) in giving voice, encouragement, and confidence to members of women, aboriginals, labour, and other groups who traditionally have been silent in the ethnographic literature.

The blocks of interview text are present in the dissertation to honour the wishes of the participants. But it is important to note how these texts were created and where and in what form they are stored.

In both communities, the first step in the interview process was to identify and secure the services of an interpreter. In Lutsel K'e the government-salaried Chipewyan/English interpreter was provided without cost by the Band. In

Qamanittuaq a freelance interpreter of many years experience was hired at an established hourly rate. The first substantial encounter with both of these men was to sit down for an extended conversation about the nature of the research, its goals, intentions, and central questions. Then, as a way of teaching the interpreter the interview protocol I had in mind, each was interviewed in English as a consultant to the project. When I was satisfied that the interpreters understood what the research was about, how I was hoping to gather information, and the kinds of information I was hoping to get, the actual interview process began.

Who was interviewed was established by the Band Council and interpreter in Lutsel K'e and by the Hamlet Council and interpreter in Qamanittuaq. I explained in my meetings with these governing groups that I was hoping to learn how land acts as a teacher for Dene and Inuit and that this meant speaking to the appropriate people in each community about their knowledge of the Thelon Game Sanctuary in particular and the barrenlands in general. I then left it to the interpreters who, with full knowledge of suggestions from the Band and Hamlet Councils and of conversations with me about the nature of the research, set out an interview list and schedule. All consultants were given a symbolic gift (fresh fruit bannock, cigarettes, or a photograph) and a $25 honourarium.

Interviews were conducted in locations chosen by the interpreter or the consultants, using the tenets of elite and specialized interviewing (Dexter 1970). Many of the consultants were old and were most comfortable speaking in their homes. Conversations always began with the interpreter telling the consultant about the research, what it was I was hoping to learn and the kinds of topics they might talk about—land, Thelon, life on the land, what land means to them. Verbal permission to use the conversation for the various purposes of the research was sought at this point. Consultants were always asked if they would agree to continue once they had been told the nature of the interest and the purposes to which their words would be put. Then the interview began. There was no questionnaire or list of topics to be followed. Some exchanges became a question and answer session, while others took the form of the consultant listening to the interpreter for ten or twenty minutes and then speaking without pause for the next twenty minutes to two hours. At the end of each conversation, the purposes of the research were reviewed and each consultant was asked if there was anything said that they would not like repeated.

All interviews were recorded on a Sony WM- D3 Professional tape recorder. Once these tapes were transcribed, labelled copies of the bilingual tapes and bound English transcripts of the verbatim transcripts (with inserted photographs of the consultants) were boxed and sent to both communities. The process of editing the interviews for the purposes of the dissertation involved first organizing what was said by topic and then choosing exemplary excerpts that would project both the voice and intent of the consultant with a conscious effort made not to betray intention or meaning in the person's words. Copies of the dissertation will be kept in both communities and effort is underway to secure Chipeywan and Inuktitut transcripts to accompany the English ones. Also in both communities, work is ongoing to produce edited and illustrated bilingual versions of the transcripts for use in the local schools.

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Zozula, K (ed.) 1981. *Baker Lake: A Community Study*. Baker Lake, NWT: Mimeograph.

Vita

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: James Raffan

Birth: Guelph, Ontario, 1955

EDUCATION

1973	John F. Ross Collegiate Vocational Institute, Guelph, Ontario
1977	Queen's University, Bachelor of Science (Honours) Biology
1978	Queen's University, Bachelor of Education
1983	Queen's University, Master of Education

EXPERIENCE

1978-1980	Teacher, North Dundas District High School, Chesterville, Ontario
1978-1985	Continuing Education Instructor, Algonquin College, Ottawa, Ontario
1980/81	Teacher, Mackenzie High School, Deep River, Ontario
1981-1984	Freelance Writer/Editor, Edviron Services
1984/85	Instructor, Queen's University, Faculty of Education
1985/86	Research Officer, Queen's University, Faculty of Education
1986-1988	Lecturer, Queen's University, Faculty of Education
1988-	Assistant Professor, Queen's University, Faculty of Education

AWARDS

1990	Co-recipient of Robin Dennis Award for outstanding contribution to outdoor education in Ontario.
1988	Fellow, Royal Canadian Geographical Society

PUBLICATIONS

1979	"Coppermine." *Nature Canada* **8**(14): 12-19.
1982	"Locker Burning: a locally developed unit of science." *The Crucible* **3**(3): 27-30.
1982	"Bronco Busting in Hogtown." *Forum* **8**(1): 28.
1982	"Onward and Downward on the Burnside." *Outdoor Canada* **10**(3): 32- 35.
1982	"Tumpline Trek on James Bay Shores." *Canadian Geographic* **102**(6): 54-59.
1982	Review of *Biology (4th edition)* by J.W. Kimball and *Biological Science* by W.A. Andrews. Science Council of Canada, June report.

1983	"When is a Tree Not a Tree?" *Canadian Geographic* **104**(4): 60-65.
1983	"Arctic Adventure: Risking Life and Limb." *Whig Standard Magazine* September 17: 5-8.
1983	Review of *Needle to the North* by A.C. Twomey. *Whig Standard Magazine* February 4: 20.
1983	Review of *Goodbye Bugs!* by A. West and B. Smallman. *Whig Standard Magazine* July 7: 21.
1983	Review of *The Canoe* by K.G. Roberts and P. Shackleton and *Canoecraft* by T. Moores and M. Mohr. *Whig Standard Magazine* December 10: 22.
1983	Author of *Wilderness Crisis Management.* Toronto: Canoe Ontario.
1984	Editor of *Canoe Ontario Safety Resource Manual.* Toronto: Canoe Ontario.
1984	"Images of Crisis Management." *Journal of Experiential Education* **7**(3): 6-10.
1984	"NASA's Eye in the Sky: A New Guide to Wilderness Navigation." *Explore* No. 15: 16-19.
1984	"Canoeing Arctic Style." *Outdoor Canada* **12**(5): 30-36.
1984	"The Mysterious Life of the Common Loon." *Nature Canada* **13**(3): 28-34.
1984	"Paddling into the Satellite Age." *Canoe* August issue: 20.
1984	"Dragonfly Drama." *Canadian Geographic* **104**(4): 83.
1984	"Learning from the Outdoors." *Whig Standard* July 14: 8.
1984	"Readin', 'Riting' and 'Rithmetic." *Canada Century Home* September/October: 43- 46.
1984	"Northern Delights." *Photo Life* **9**(11): 43-37.
1984	"Hiking on Top of the World." *Explore* No. 18: 19-21.
1984	"What's the Magic?" *Anee* Fall issue: 20.
1984	Review of *The Iceberg* by R. Brown. *Whig Standard Magazine* February 18: 19.
1984	Review of *The Day After World War III* by E. Zuckerman. *Whig Standard Magazine.* August 18: 19.
1984	Review of *Botany in the Field* by J. Scott; *Suburban Wildlife* by R. Headstrom; *The Seaside Naturalist* by D.A. Coulombe; and *Harvesting the Northern Wild* by M. Walker. *Canadian Geographic* **104**(5): 81-82.
1984	Review of *The Last of the Wild Horses* by M. Harbury and R. Watts. *Canadian Geographic* **104**(6): 76.
1984	Review of *A Vast and Magnificent Land* by M. Bray and E. Epp. *Canadian Geographic* **105**(2): 80.
1984-1987	Editor of *Canews*, the quarterly newsmagazine of the Ontario Recreational Canoeing Association.
1985	"Hot Camping in a Cold Climate." *Nature Canada* **14**(1): 39-44.

1985	"The Hot Way to Go." *Outdoor Canada* **14**(1): 28-34.
1985	"Life in Broughton Island." *Whig Standard Magazine* December 6: 5-9.
1985	"Auyuittuq Summer." *Whig Standard Magazine* November 30: 6-10.
1985	Review of *The War Against the Seals: A history of the North American Seal Fishery* by B.C. Busch. *Whig Standard Magazine* September 7: 22.
1985	Review of *Arctic Whalers, Icy Seas* by W.G. Ross and *A Fur Trader's Photographs* by W.C. James. *Whig Standard Magazine* November 23: 19.
1986	Editor of *Wildwaters: Canoeing Canada's Wilderness Rivers.* Toronto: Key Porter Books.
1986	"The Indoor/Outdoor Dilemma." *Outdoor Recreation Research Journal* **2**: 38-45.
1986	"Destination Wager Bay." *Whig Standard Magazine* October 25: 5-8.
1986	"Credit: A river in jeopardy." *Paddler* Charter issue: 11-16.
1986	"At One with the River." *Empress* October issue: 12-20.
1986	Review of *Nastawgan: The Canadian North by canoe and snowshoe* by B. Hodgins and M. Hobbs. *Canadian Geographic* **106**(2): 76-77.
1986	Review of *Rivergods: Exploring the world's great wild rivers* by R. Bangs and C. Kallen. *Whig Standard Magazine* April 19: 21.
1987	"A Book Flogger's Diary." *Whig Standard Magazine* February 14: 25.
1987	"Assimilating Safety Information: Problems and solutions." *Anee* **16**(3): 12-13.
1987	"Whither Wager Bay?" *Park News* **23**(2): 7-9.
1987	"Keewatin: A canoeists' symposium." *Paddler* **2**(1): 16-17.
1987	"The River as Teacher: Summary." *Anee* **17**(2): 8.
1987	Review of *Paddle to the Amazon* by D. Starkell. *Whig Standard Magazine* October 10: 21.
1987	Review of *The New North* by A.D. Cameron. *Whig Standard Magazine* March 7: 22.
1987	Review of *After the School Bell Rings* by C.A. Grant and C. Sleeter. *Teacher College Record* **89**(1): 153-155.
1988	Co-Editor of *Canexus: The canoe in Canadian culture.* Toronto: Betelgeuse Books.
1988	"Clear Water, Sacred Space." A chapter in *America's Hidden Wilderness: Lands of Seclusion.* Washington: National Geographic Society. Also published in Italy as *Natura Segreta d'America.*
1988	"Wilderness Crisis Management." ERIC/CRESS Resources in Education ERIC RC 016 935.
1988	"Reflection on Action: The evolution of a program component." *Journal of Experiential Education* **11**(2): 9-13.
1988	"Big Sky, Big Water." *Outdoor Canada* **16**(5): 1-8.

1988	*Wilderness Crisis Management. Explore* Magazine technical paper #11.
1988	"Farewell to an Ordinary Hero: Celebrating the Life of Bill Mason." *Paddler* Winter issue: 13-16.
1988	Review of *Arctic Imperative: Is Canada losing the North?* by J. Honderich and *Politics of the Northwest Passage* by F. Griffiths. *Whig Standard Magazine* January 23: 20.
1988	Review of *Crossing Open Ground* by B. Lopez. *Whig Standard Magazine* April 4: 21.
1989	"Sharing the Path: Reflections on journals from an expedition." *Journal of Experiential Education* **12**(2): 29-36.
1989	"A Case for Outdoor Education." *Pathways: The Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education* April issue: 10-11.
1989	"William C. Mason: Lessons from the master outdoor teacher." *Pathways: The Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education* June issue: 17-22.
1989	"Adventure on the Kazan: Operation Raleigh—Canada's Arctic Expedition." *Explore* No. 41: 14-18.
1989	Review of *The Road to Nunavut; The Coldest Harbour in the Land; The Life of the Harp Seal; and My Life Among the Eskimos* *Whig Standard Magazine* April 8: 24.
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